CONFESSION of [illegible]

OF

The Reformed CHURCHES in the NETHERLANDS.

WITH

The FORMES which they uſe

In { *The adminiſtration of the Sacraments.*
The Exerciſe of Eccleſiaſticall diſcipline.
The confirmation of Eccleſiaſticall Officers, Miniſters, Elders and Deacons.
The Celebration of Marriage before the Church.

Tranſlated out of Dutch into Engliſh.

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CONFESSION of FAITH,

Reviſed in the Nationall Synod laſt held at Dordrecht, in the year of our Lord 1618. and 1619.

The I Article.

WE all do believe with the heart and confeſs with the mouth, that there is one onely and ſingle Spiritual Being, which we call God: everlaſting, incomprehenſible, inviſible, unchangeable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wiſe, juſt, good, and a ſuper-abounding fountain of all good.

II.

We know him by two means: Firſt by the Creation, and maitaning, and governing of the whole World; ſeing it is before our eyes as a fair book, in which all the Creatures, both great and ſmall, are as characters, ſhowing unto us the inviſible things of God, *viz.* his *eternal power and Godhead*, as St. Paul ſaith, Rom. 1. 20. All which things are ſufficient to convince Mankind, and to leave them without excuſe. Secondly he makes him ſelf known unto us more plainly and fully by his Holy and Divine Word, to wit, as much as we ſtand in need of in this life, to his Glory and the Salvation of his people;

III.

We confeſs that this Word of God was not ſent nor produced by the will of man, but *holy men of God ſpoke as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt*, as St. Peter tells us. God afterwards, by a ſpecial care which he takes for us and our Salvation, commanded his Servants, the Prophets, and Apoſtles, to write down his manifeſted Word: And he himſelf wrote with his own finger, the two Tables of the Law. Therefore we call ſuch Writings, Holy and Divine Scriptures.

IV.

We comprehend the Holy Scriptures in the two Volumnes of the Old and New Teſtament, which are Canonical Books, without all contradiction. Theſe are ſummed up in the Church of God after this manner: The Books of the Old Teſtament are the five Books of Moſes, *viz.* Geneſis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronome; the Book of Joſhua, Judges, Ruth, two Books of Samuel, and two Books of the Kings, two Books of the Chronicles; the firſt Book of Ezra, Nehemiah, Eſther, Job, the Pſalms of David, the three Books of Solomon, *viz.* the Proverbs, Eccleſiaſtes, and the Song; the four great Prophets, *viz.* Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel; and the other twelf leſſer Prophets, *viz.* Hoſea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah,

Micah, Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. Thoſe of the New Teſtament are the four Evangeliſts, *viz.* Mathew, Mark, Luke, John; the Acts of the Apoſtles, the fourteen Epiſtles of the Apoſtle Paul, *viz.* to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Epheſians, to the Philippians, to the Coloſſians, two to the Theſſalonians, two to Timothie, to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; the ſeven Epiſtles of the other Apoſtles, *viz.* the Epiſtle of James, the two Epiſtles of Peter, the three Epiſtles of John, the Epiſtle of Jude, and the Revelation of the Apoſtle John.

V.

Theſe Books onely we receive as holy and canonical, to the regulating, grounding, and confirming of our Faith; believing without any doubt all which is contained in them, not ſo much becauſe the Church doth receive and take them for ſuch; but more eſpecially becauſe the holy Ghoſt bears witneſs in our hearts that they are from God; ſeeing they carry the evidence of it along with them: for the very blind are able to perceive the fulfilling of thoſe matters, that are fore told in the ſame;

VI.

We diſtinguiſh thoſe holy Books from the Apocryphal, *viz.* the third and fourth Book of Ezdras, the Books of Tobie and Judith, the Books of Wisdom, Jeſus Syrach, Baruch, the Appendix to the book of Eſther, the prayer of the three men in the fire, the Hiſtory of Suſanne, that of the Image of Bell, and the Dragon, the prayer of Manaſſe, the Books of the Macchabees. All which the Church may read, and take inſtruction out of them, in as much as they do agree with the Canonical Books: But they have not ſuch a power and efficacy, as to confirm by any of their Teſtimonies any point of the Faith or Chriſtian Religion; much leſs, to detract of the authority of thoſe other Holy Books.

VII.

We believe that theſe Holy Scriptures doe fully contain the will of God, and that every thing, which a man ought to believe unto Salvation, is ſufficiently taught in the ſame. For becauſe the whole manner of ſervice which God requires of us, is writ down in them at large, it is unlawfull, for any one thô an Apoſtle, to teach otherwiſe then we are taught by the Holy Scriptures; nay though it was an Angel from heaven, as S^t. Paul ſaith. For ſeeing it is forbidden to add unto, or take away any thing from the word of God, it doth evidently appear that the Doctrine of it is very perfect, and compleat in all reſpects. Neither ought we to compare the writings of any men, thô never ſo holy, unto thoſe divine Scriptures; nor the cuſtoms with the truth of God, (for the truth is above all) nor the great multitude, nor Antiquity, nor Succeſſion of times or Perſones, nor Councels or Decrees. For all men are naturally Lyars, and more vain then Vanity it ſelf. Therefore we reject with

with our very heart, every thing which doth not agree with this infallible Rule, as the Apoſtles have taught us, ſaying, *Try the Spirits whether they are of God.* And, *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your houſe.*

VIII.

According to this truth and this Word of God, we believe in one onely God, who is one ſingle Being, which are three perſons in deed and in truth and from everlaſting diſtinguiſhed, according to their incommunicable Attributes, *viz.* the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt. The Father is the cauſe, the original, and the beginning of all things, both viſible and inviſible: the Son is the Word, the Wisdom, and the Image of the Father: the Holy Ghoſt is the eternal ſtrength and power proceeding from the Father and the Son. Nevertheleſs God is not, by this diſtinction, divided into three, ſince the Holy Scriptures doe teach us, That the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, each of them hath his ſubſtance, diſtinguiſhed by their Attributes; but thus, that theſe three perſons are but one onely God. Hence it is plain, that the Father is not the Son, and that the Son is not the Father, and that neither the Holy Ghoſt is the Father, nor the Son. Howbeit theſe perſons thus diſtinguiſhed, are not divided, nor mixed together. For the Father has not taken upon him the Fleſh, neither hath the Holy Ghoſt done it; but onely the Son: the Father hath never been without his Son, or without his Holy Ghoſt; for they are all three coeternall, and coeſſential. There is no firſt nor laſt; for they are all three one in truth, in power, in goodneſs, and mercy.

IX.

All this we know from the Teſtimonies of the Holy Scriptures, as alſo from the Operations of them, and chiefly by thoſe which we feel in ourſelves. The Teſtimonies of the Holy Scriptures, that teach us to believe this holy Trinity, are held forth in many places of the Old Teſtament; which is needleſs to ſum up; onely to ſelect them diſtinctly and judicially. In Geneſ. 1: 26. God ſaith, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeneſs*, &c. and *Vs.* 27. *So God created man in his own image, male and female created he them.* And Gen. 3: 22. *Behold the man is become as one of us.* From thence it appeares, that there is more then one Perſon in the Godhead; when he ſaith Let U S make Man in our Image: and he points at the ſingleneſs, when he ſaith, God created, It is very true, he doth not ſay, how many perſones there are; but that which ſeemes obſcure unto us in the Old Teſtament, is very plain in the New: for when our Lord was baptiſed in Jordan, the voice of the Father was heard, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son*, the Son was ſeen in the water, and the holy Ghoſt made himſelf manifeſt in the ſhape of a Dove. Likewiſe in the Baptiſm of Believers this form is inſtituted by Chriſt. *Baptize all Nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.*

In the Goſpel of St Luke the Angel Gabriel ſpeakes to Mary, the Mother of our Lord, after this manner; *The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall over ſhadow thee: therefore alſo that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God.* At another place it is ſaid. *The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghoſt be with you, There are three that bear record in heaven the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghoſt; and theſe three are one.* In all theſe places we are fully taught that there are three Perſons in one ſole Divine Beeing; and thô this Doctrine farr ſurpaſſes the underſtanding of man, we nevertheleſs now believe the ſame through the Word, waiting untill we ſhall enjoy the compleat knowledge and the fruits thereof in Heaven. Further more we muſt conſider the particular Offices and operations of theſe three Perſons, towards us: The Father is called our Creator by his Power; the Son is our Saviour and Redeemer, by his Blood; the Holy Ghoſt is our Sanctifier by his dwelling in our hearts. This Doctrine of the holy Trinity hath alwayes been aſſented and maintained by the true Church, everſince the times of the Apoſtles, hitherto, againſt the Jewes, Mahumetans, and ſome falſe Chriſtians and Hereticks, as Marcion, Manes, Praxeas, Sabellius, Samoſatenus, Arrius and ſome others who have juſtly been condemned by the holy Fathers. Therefore in this point we do willingly receive the three Symbols of the Faith, *viz.* that of the Apoſtles, of Nicea, and of Athanaſius; and alſo that which conformable there unto is agreed upon by the Ancients.

X.

We beleeve that Jeſus Chriſt according to his divine Nature is the onely begotten Son of God, born from eternity; not made, nor created (for then he ſhould be a Creature) but coeſſential with the Father, alſo coeternall, the expreſs image of his Fathers ſubſtance, and the brightneſs of his Glory, equalwith him in all things. Who is the Son of God not onely from the time that he hath taken upon him our nature, but from all eternity, as theſe Teſtimonies teach us, when compared together; Moſes ſaith that God hath created the World; and St. John ſaith that all things are created by that Word which he calles God; the Apoſtle ſaith that God has made the times by his Son, alſo that God created all things through Jeſus Chriſt; then conſequently he that is called God, the Word, the Son, and Jeſus Chriſt, muſt needs have been before, if ſo be that all things are created by him. And therefore ſaith the Prophet Micah, *His goings forth have been from of old, from everlaſting*; and the Apoſtle, *That he hath neither beginning of dayes, nor end of life.* Then he is the true everlaſting God, the omnipotent, whom we adore, worſhip and ſerve.

XI.

We believe and confeſs alſo that the holy Ghoſt proceeds from the Father and

and the Son from everlaſting, not being made, nor created, nor born, but onely proceeding from both; who is in order the third Perſon of the Trinity; coeſſential, and equal in Majeſty and glory with the Father and the Son: being true and eternal God, as the holy Scriptures do teach us.

XII.

We believe that the Father by his Word, that is, by his Son hath created out of nothing, the Heaven, the Earth, and all Creatures, when it ſeemed good unto him, giving unto every Creature its beeing, ſhape and form, and ſeverall offices to ſerve his Creator; that he doth alſo up hold and govern them according to his eternal providence and infinite power, for the ſervice of mankind; that ſo Man may ſerve his God. He hath alſo created the Angels good, for to be his Meſſengers, and Miniſters unto his elected: ſome of which are fallen from that Excellency, in which God created them, into everlaſting deſtruction; and others have kept ſteadfaſt, by the Grace of God, in their primitive ſtate. The Devils and evil ſpirits are ſo farr corrupted, that they are become enemies unto God and every good thing: laying in wait, to the utmoſt off their power, like robbers and murtherers for the Church and every member thereof, for to ſpoil and deſtroy all by their deceit. And ſo they are condemned by their own wickedneſs unto eternal damnation, daily expecting their horrible torments. Therefore we reject and abhor the error of the Sadducees, who denied the exiſtency of Spirits and Angels; as alſo the error of the Manichees, who affirm that the original of the Devils is out of them ſelves, inasmuch that they are evil by their own nature, without having been corrupted.

XIII.

We believe that the ſame good God, after having created all things, hath not dismiſt them, nor given them up to Chance or Fortune; but governs and rules them according to his holy will, not ſuffering any thing to fall out in this World without his direction; nevertheleſs God is neither Author, nor guilty of any ſin that is committed. For his Power and goodneſs is ſo large and incomprehenſible, that he operates and acts all his works juſtly, even then when the Devils and the wicked do act injuſtly. And as to his acting of any thing which ſurpaſſes the underſtanding of men; we will not be to nice in ſearching any further, then our capacity will admit: but we do humbly adore with all due reſpect and humility the righteous Judgements of God, which are hid from us; contenting our ſelves that we are Diſciples of Chriſt, onely for to learn thoſe things, which he makes manifeſt in his word, without paſſing beyond thoſe Limits. This Doctrine affords us unſpeakable conſolation; ſince we are taught thereby, that nothing can befall us by chance, but all is by the direction of our bountifull heavenly Father, who watches over us with a Fatherly care, keeping all Creatures under his Power, ſo that not a hair of our head (for they are all numbred) nor a Bird, can fall upon

upon the ground, without the will of our Father: on whom we do rely, wel knowing that he refrains the Devils and all our Enemies, who are not able, without his will and permiſſion, to hurt us. And thus we reject that damnable Error of the Epicureans, who ſay, that God doth not trouble him ſelf with any thing, but permits all to be acted by Chance.

XIV.

We believe that God hath created Man out of the duſt of the Earth, and has made and formed him after his own image and likeneſs, good, righteous and holy, being able to make his will agree in all things with the will of God. But being ſtated in honour he him ſelf did not underſtand it, neither knew he his Excellency; but ſubjected himſelf wilfully unto ſin, and conſequently unto Death and the Curſe, giving ear unto the word of the Devil. For he transgreſſed the command of Life, which he had received, and by ſin ſeparated him ſelf from God, his true life, having corrupted his whole nature: whereby he hath brought upon him corporal and Spirituall death. Being thus become wicked, perverted, and corrupted in all his wayes, he has loſt all excellent gifts, which he had received from God; having nothing left him, but ſome ſmall remnants thereof, which are ſufficient to leave man without excuſe: for all the Light which is in us, is changed into Darkneſs; as the Scriptures do teach us, ſaing *The Light ſhineth in Darkneſs, and the Darkneſs comprehended it not.* Where St. John calls men Darkneſs. Therefore we reject all which is taught, contrary to this, of the Free-will of men, ſeeing Man is but a Slave to ſin, and can receive nothing but what is given him from Heaven. For who can glory of any good which he is able to do out of him ſelf; ſince Chriſt ſaith *No man can come unto me, except the Father, who has ſent me, drawes him?* Who can rely upon his own will, if he underſtands that to be carnally minded is Enmity againſt God? Who can ſpeak of his knowledge, ſeeing the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God? In a word, who ſhall propound any thought, ſince he knowes, that we are not able out of our ſelves to think any thing, as from our ſelves, but that our ability is from God: and therefore what the Apoſtle ſaith ought with right to be kept ſure and firme; *That God worketh in us both to will and to do, of his good pleaſure:* for there is no underſtanding nor will conformable unto the underſtanding of God, but what Chriſt has wrought in man; which he teacheth us, ſaying, *Without me yee can do nothing.*

XV.

We believe that through the disobedience of Adam the Originall Sinn has ſpread it ſelf over all Mankind: which is a Corruption of the whole Nature, and an hereditary diſeaſe, where with all Infants are infected even in their mothers wombs, and which produceth in man all ſorts of ſinn, being in him as a root thereof; and is therefore ſo vile and abominable in the ſight of God, that it is ſufficient to condemn all mankind; neither is it quite put away or

deſtroyed

deſtroyed by the Baptiſm: but ſin doth always proceed from this unhappy fountain, as water out of a well: yet it is not imputed the Children of God unto damnation, but by his grace and Mercy it is forgiven them: not for to reſt quiet in ſin; but becauſe the Believers ſhould often groan under the ſence of this corruption, deſiring to be diſſolved from this body of death. And therefore we reject the doctrine of the Pelagians, who ſay that this ſin is nothing elſe but from imitation.

XVI.

Wee believe that the whole generation of Adam being fallen into corruption and ruine by the ſin of the firſt man, God hath ſhewed him ſelf ſuch as he is, viz. Mercifull and juſt: Mercifull, becauſe he draweth out of this Corruption and delivers thoſe, whom he hath elected in his eternal and unchangeable council, of his meer mercy in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord; without any regard unto their works. Juſt, becauſe he leaves others in their fall and deſtruction, wherein they have caſt themſelves.

XVII.

Wee believe that our gracious God, by his wonderful wisdom and goodnes, ſeeing that man had caſt him ſelf into a corporal and ſpiritual Death, and ſo was become a moſt miſerable creature, hath even ſought for him when he fled away from him with trembling; and comforted him, promiſing him to give his ſon, who ſhould be born of a woman, and bruiſe the head of the Serpent, to make him everlaſting happy.

XVIII.

Wee confeſs that God hath fullfilled the promiſes which he hath made unto the Fathers by the mouth of his holy Prophets, ſending his own onely begotten eternal ſon in the world in due time, who took upon him the form of a ſervant, and is become like unto man, taking indeed upon him a real humane nature, with all its infirmities, ſin onely excepted; being conceived in the womb of the bleſſed virgin Mary, by the virtue of the Holy Ghoſt without the means of man. And he hath not onely taken upon him the humane nature, as to the Body, but alſo a real human ſoule, that ſo he might be a real man. For ſeeing that both the Soul and the body were loſt, it was needfull that he ſhould take them both upon him, that ſo they might both be ſaved. Therefore in oppoſition to the Hereſy of the Anabaptiſts, who deny that Chriſt took humane fleſh from his Mother, wee confeſs, that Chriſt is become partaker of the fleſh and blood of Children; that he is a fruit of the Loins of David after the fleſh, proceeded from the ſeed of David after the Fleſh; a fruit of Mary's Womb; begotten by a Woman, a branch of David, a Shoot from the root Jeſſe, deſcended from the Tribe of Juda; proceeded from the Jews after the fleſh, of the ſeed of Abraham, ſince he took upon him the ſeed of Abraham, and is become like unto his Brethren in all things, ſin excepted; ſo that of a truth he is our Immanuel, that is, God with us.

XIX.

Wee believe that the Person of the Son, through this conception, is united and joined inseparably with the humane nature; so that there are not two Sons of God, nor two Persons; but two natures in one single Person united, yet every nature keeping its distinct attribute As the divine Nature hath alwayes been uncreated, without beginning of dayes or end of life, filling heaven and earth; also the humane nature hath not lost its qualities; but remained a Creature having beginning of dayes, being a finall nature, and keeping all that which belongs to a true body. And although he fastened immortality upon it, by his Resurrection, yet he hath not changed the reality of his humane nature; because our salvation and resurrection also depends from the reality of his body. But these two natures are united so close in one person, that they have not been separated even by his death. Therefore that which at his dying he committed in the hands of his Father, was a real Humane Spirit, departing from his body; nevertheless the divine nature was alwayes united with the humane, even when he laid in the Grave: And the Godhead did not cease in him, no more then when he was a little Child, thô it did not appear so manifestly for a while. Therefore we confess him to be real God and real Man; real God, for to overcome Death, by his power; and real man, that by the infirmity of his flesh he might die for us.

XX

Wee believe that God, who is perfectly merciful and just, hath sent his Son for to take upon him that nature, in which the disobedience was committed: that so in it he might give satisfaction for, and suffer the punishment of sin by his severe sufferings and Death. Thus God hath exercised his justice against his Son, when he Laid our sins upon him; and hath powred forth his Goodness and Mercy on us, who were guilty and worthy of condemnation; in giving his Son up unto Death, through a perfect love; and raising him up to our justification, that so by him we might obtain immortality, and life eternal.

XXI.

Wee believe Jesus Christ to be an everlasting High-priest with and after the order of Melchisedec, having proposed him self in our name to the Father for to allay his anger with full satisfaction, offering him self up unto the Cross, and shedding his precious blood, to the cleansing of our sins, as the Prophets have fore-told. For it is written, that the punishment is laid upon the Son of God, that we might have peace, and be healed by his wounds; that he was brought to death like a Lamb, being reckoned among the malefactors; that he was condemned as a malefactor by Pontius Pilate, although he found him not guilty. Thus he has paied for that, which he did not rob, and suffered, though just, for the un just both in body and soul, feeling the horrible punishment which our sins deserved, inasmuch that his sweat became like unto drops of bloud falling upon the ground. He cryed, *My God, my God, why hast*

thou

thou forſaken me? Suffering al this for the remiſſion of our ſins. Therefore we ſay right wel with Saint Paul, That *we do not know any thing, ſave Chriſt, and him crucified; we count all things but dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* we find all manner of conſolation in his wounds, and we have no need to ſeek or invent any other means, to be reconciled unto God, but this one ſacrifice once offered up, through which the Believers become perfect for ever. This alſo is the cauſe why he was called by the Angel of God, Jeſus, that is Saviour, becauſe he ſhould ſave his people from their ſins.

XXII.

Wee believe, That for the attaining to the true knowledge of this Myſtery, the Holy Ghoſt kindles in our hearts a ſincere Belief, which embraces Jeſus Chriſt with all his merits, and owns him, ſeeking nothing beſides him. For it muſt needs follow, that either every thing, which is required to our ſalvation, is not in Chriſt Jeſus; or if all things are in him, then he, who enjoys Chriſt by Faith, muſt have his ſalvation intirely. Now to ſay that Chriſt is not ſufficient, but that there wants ſomething beſides him, would be to groſs a Blaſphemy; for hence it would follow, that Chriſt was but half a Saviour. Therefore wee have juſt cauſe to ſay with St. Paul, that wee are juſtified onely by Faith, or by Faith without works. Yet, to ſpeak more properly, wee do not mean the Faith to be that, by which wee are juſtified, for it is but an Inſtrument, by which wee embrace Chriſt, our righteouſneſs. But Jeſus Chriſt imputing us all his merits, and ſo many holy works as he has done for us and in our room is our Righteousnes, and Faith is an Inſtrument by which wee are made partakers of all his goods; which being become ours, are more then ſufficient to the abſolving us of our ſins.

XXIII.

Wee believe that our happineſs conſiſts in the Remiſſion of our ſins, for Jeſus Chriſt ſake; and that our righteouſneſs before God is contained therein; as David and St. Paul do teach us, declaring this to be the happineſs of man, that God imputes him the righteouſneſs without works; and the ſame Apoſtle ſaith that wee are juſtified freely, or through Grace, by the Redemption which is in Chriſt Jeſus. And therefore wee do alwayes lay hold of this foundation; giving all glory unto God, and humbling and acknowledging our ſelfs to be ſuch, as realy wee are: without boaſting of any thing out of our ſelves, or our own merits, but onely relying on the obedience of Chriſt the crucified; which is ours, if wee believe in him; being ſufficient to hide all our Iniquities, and to give us boldneſs, to free the conſcience from terror, aſtoniſhment and fear to approach unto God; without doing like our firſt Father Adam, who trembling covered him ſelf with fig-leaves. And truly if wee were to appear before God, relying upon our ſelves, or any other creature, though never ſo little, alas! wee would be devoured. And therefore every

one ought to ſay with David; Lord do not enter into judgment with thy ſervant; for no living creature will be juſtified before thee.

XXIV.

Wee believe, that this true Faith being wrought in man, by the hearing of the Word of God, and the operation of the Holy Ghoſt, doth regenerate and change him into a new man, by which he comes to live a new life, and is made free from the bondage of ſin; This juſtifying Faith therefore is ſo far from making man grow cold in an honeſt and holy life; that without it they will never do any thing out of love unto God, but onely out of love unto themſelves, and for fear of being damned. It is therefore impoſſible that this holy Faith ſhould be unfruitfull in man; for wee do not ſpeak of a vain Belief, but of ſuch an one which in the Scriptures is called a Faith that worketh by Love, and ſtirreth man to the excerciſe of thoſe works, which God hath commanded in his Word. Which works, if they proceed from the good root of Faith, are good and acceptable unto God, becauſe they are ſanctified by his Grace; in the mean while they are of no account towards our Juſtification. For it is by Faith in Chriſt that wee are juſtified, even before wee do any good works; otherwiſe they could not be good, no more then the fruit of a Tree can be good, before the Tree it ſelf is good. Thus wee do good works, but not for any merit, (for what could wee merit?) Nay wee are beholding unto God for thoſe good works which we do do, and not he unto us; ſince it is he that worketh in us both to will and to do, according to his own good pleaſure. Let us therefore take notice of this ſaying which is left upon record: *When ye ſhall have done all theſe things, which are commanded you, ſay, wee are unprofitable ſervants: wee have done that which was our duty to do.* Yet wee do not deny that God rewards the good works, but it is through his grace, that he crownes his Gifts. Moreover though wee act good works, yet wee do not build our ſalvation thereon: for wee can do nothing which is not defiled by our fleſh, and worthy of puniſhment; and though it were otherwiſe, yet the remembrance of one ſin is ſufficient, to make God reject it. So wee ſhould always be doubtfull and floating to and fro, without any certainty, and our poor conſciences be vexed continually, if they did not rely on the merits of the ſufferings and dying of our Saviour.

XXV.

Wee believe that the Ceremonies and Figures of the Law are ceaſed at the coming of Chriſt, and that all ſhadows are finiſhed: wherefore the uſe and practiſe of them ought to be abrogated among the Chriſtians: yet the truth and ſubſtance of the ſame remaines with us in Chriſt Jeſus, in whom they are fulfilled, in the mean while wee make uſe of the Teſtimonies of the Law and the Prophets, to confirm us in the Goſpel, and to order our life and converſation in all honeſty, to the Glory of God, according to his will.

XXVI. Wee

XXVI.

Wee believe that wee have no acces unto God, but by the onely Mediator and Advocate Chriſt Jeſus the righteous: who for this cauſe is become man, uniting together the divine and humane nature, that ſo wee might have acces unto the divine Majeſty; for otherwiſe our acces would be barred up; But this Mediator, whom the Father hath given us, to interceed between him and us, muſt not deter us through his goodneſs; and cauſe us to ſeek for another according to our fancy. For there is none in heaven nor in earth among the Creatures, who loveth us more then Jeſus Chriſt; who, thô he was in the form of God, yet made him ſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a man and a ſervant, for our ſakes, and is made like unto his Brethren in all things. Now if wee were to ſeek for another Mediator, that might be favourable unto us, whom could wee find that would love us more, then he who laid down his life for us, even whilſt wee were his Enemies? And if wee look for one that is mighty and majeſtious; who is more conſpicuous then he that ſits at the right hand of his Father, having all power in heaven and earth? Who ſhall bee ſooner heard then the welbeloved Son of God, Therefore it is onely by a miſtruſting that this practice was introduced of diſhonouring the Saints inſtead of honouring them, doing that which they never have done nor required, but conſtantly and according to their duty rejected, as appeares from their writings. And it ought not to be objected here that wee are not worthy, for it is not intended that wee ſhould offer up our prayers on the account of our worthineſs, but onely becauſe of the Excellency and worthineſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe righteouſneſs is become ours by Faith. The Apoſtle therefore, to take away from us this fooliſh fear, or rather miſtruſt, tells us, that *Jeſus Chriſt is made like unto his Bretheren in all things; that he might be a Mercifull and faithfull High Prieſt, to purify the ſins of the people. For in that he him ſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* And to give us more encouragement to go to him, he tells us. *Seeing then that wee have a great High-prieſt that is paſſed into the Heavens, Jeſus the Son of God, let us hold faſt our profeſſion. For wee have not an High-prieſt, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like wee are, yet without ſin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of grace, that wee may obtaine Mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* The ſame Apoſtle ſaith, that wee have liberty, *to enter into the Holieſt by the blood of Jeſus; Let us draw near*, ſaith he, *in full aſſurance of faith*, &c. Item, *Chriſt hath an unchangeable Prieſthood: wherefore he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him; ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* What do wee then want more, ſince Chriſt him ſelf ſayes. *I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.* Why ſhould wee look for another Advocate, ſeeing it hath pleaſed God to give us his Son

for an Advocate. Let us not leave him for to take another, or rather to ſeek for another, without ever finding him: for when God did give him unto us, he knew very well that wee were Sinners. Therefore according to Chriſts commandment, wee call upon our heavenly Father through Jeſus Chriſt our onely Mediator, as wee are taught in the Lords prayer; being aſſured that what ever wee pray for to the Father in his name, it ſhall be given us.

XXVII.

Wee believe and profeſs one onely Catholick or univerſal Church, which is a holy Congregation of true Chriſtian believers, who expect their ſalvation altogether in Chriſt Jeſus, being waſhed by his blood, and Sanctifyed and ſealed by the holy Ghoſt. This Church hath been from the beginning of the World, and will continue to the end of it: as doth appear by Chriſt his being an everlaſting King, who cannot be without ſubjects. And this holy Church is kept and preſerved by God againſt the rage of the whole World: although ſomtimes ſhe may become very ſmall, and almoſt vaniſhed in the eyes of men: as when the Lord, during the dangerous Reign of Achab, had kept ſeven thouſand men, who had not bowed their knees before Baal. Moreover this Holy Church is not ſituated in or bound or limited to a certain place, or to certain perſons, but ſhe is ſpread and ſcattered through the whole World, being nevertheleſs joined together and united with heart, will, and the ſame Spirit, by the power of Faith.

XXVIII.

Wee believe, ſeeing this holy Congregation is an Aſſembly of thoſe that are ſaved, and that without it there is no ſalvation, that none, of what condition or quality ſoever, ought to keep himſelf ſeparate, or to rely upon his own perſon; but that it is the duty of all men to join and comply with it, preſerving the unity of the Church, ſubmitting themſelves to the Inſtruction and Cenſure thereof, bowing their necks under the yoke of Chriſt Jeſus, and ſerving to the edification of the Brethren, according to the gift which God hath afforded them; as mutual members of the ſame body; and to the better compaſſing of theſe ends, it is a duty incumbent on all believers, according to the Word of God, to ſeparate themſelves from thoſe that are not of the Church, and to join to this Congregation, in what place ſoever God hath conſtituted the ſame, although it were contrary to the decrees of Magiſtrates and Princes, even on pain of corporal puniſhment, or death. Wherefore all thoſe, who ſeparate themſelves from this Church, or do not join with it, act againſt the ordinance of God.

XXIX.

Wee believe that it is requiſite, to ſearch diligently, and with a circumſpect care to diſcerne from the Word of God, which is the true Church; ſince all Sects that are in the World now adayes do cover themſelves with the

the name of the Church. Wee do not ſpeak of the company of Hypocrites, who are mixed in the Church amongſt the good ones, without belonging to the Church, thô outwardly they are in it: but wee ſay that the body and Communion of the true Church ought to be diſtinguiſhed from all Sects who call them ſelves the Church. The marks to know the true Church by are theſe: If in the Church there is a pure preaching of the Goſpel; If the pure adminiſtration of the Sacraments, ſo as it is inſtituted by Chriſt him ſelf, is made uſe of; If the Eccleſiaſtical cenſure is exerciſed for the puniſhment of ſins; In a word, if the converſation is according to the pure Word of God, rejecting all things contrary thereunto, and holding Jeſus Chriſt as the onely head: By theſe tokens one may certainly know the true Church, and none ought to ſeparate themſelves from the ſame. And as for thoſe that are of the Church, they may be known by the marks of the Chriſtians, *viz.* by their Faith, and when they have received the onely Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, avoiding ſin, and purſuing righteousneſs, loving the true God and their neighbour, not declining neither to the right nor to the left hand, and crucifying their fleſh with its deeds: Nevertheleſs they may be attended with great weakneſs, but they fight againſt it through the Spirit all the dayes of their life, having continually recours to the blood, death, ſufferings and obedience of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in which they have remiſſion of ſins, through Faith in him. As for the falſe Church, ſhe aſcribes unto her ſelf and her ordinances more power and Authority, then to the Word of God; and will not ſubmit unto the yoke of Chriſt; ſhe adminiſters the Sacraments not after ſuch a Manner as Chriſt hath inſtituted in his word: but ſhe adds and takes away, according to her pleaſure: She relyeth more upon men, then upon Chriſt; ſhe perſecutes thoſe who live a holy life, according to the Word of God, and who rebuke her faults, coveteousneſs and Idolatry. Theſe two Churches may eaſily be known and diſtinguiſhed.

XXX.

Wee believe that this true Church muſt be governed according to the Spirituall policy which our Lord hath taught us in his word: *viz.* That there muſt be Miniſters or Paſtors for to preach the Word of God, and to adminiſter the Sacraments; as alſo Overſeers and Deacons to make up together with the Paſtors an Eccleſiaſtical Councel; and by this means to maintain the true Religion, and to procure a free courſe for the true Doctrine; likewiſe that the Transgreſſors be puniſhed and reſtrained by Spirituall means; that the poor and diſtreſſed be alſo relieved and comforted, according to what they ſtand in need of. Through theſe means all things will proceed well and orderly in the Church, when ſuch perſons are choſen who are faithfull, and according to the rule which St. Paul preſcribes in his Epiſtle to Timothy.

XXXI

Wee believe that the Miniſters of the Word of God, and the Elders and Dea-

Deacons, ought to be choſen to their reſpective offices by a lawfull Election, with invocation of the Name of the Lord, and in good order, as the Word of God teacheth. Every one therefore muſt take care of intruding him ſelf by undecent means; but ought to ſtay untill he be call'd by God, that ſo he may have a teſtimony of his calling, and be certain and aſſured that it is of the Lord; And as for the Miniſters of the Word, where ever they are, they have an equal power and Authority, being all Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, the one general Biſhop and onely head of the Church. Moreover, leaſt the holy ordinance of God be violated or deſpiſed, wee ſay, that every one ought te have a ſpeciall reſpect unto the Miniſters of the Word and the Elders of the Church, for their works ſake, and to live in peace with them, without murmuring, ſtrife, or diſſention, as much as poſſibly can be.

XXXII.

In the mean while wee believe, although it may be ſerviceable and good, that thoſe who govern the Church, do inſtitute among them ſelves certain ordinances for the maintenance and ſupporting the body of the Church, yet that they ought to take heed of departing from any thing which Chriſt our onely maſter hath ordered. And therefore wee reject all manner of humane inventions and Laws, which any might introduce in the Worſhip of God, thereby to bind and compell the conſciences: Admitting of nothing but what may ſerve to the nouriſhing and preſervation of Concord and Unity, and to keep all in the obedience of God, unto which the Excommunication is required, according to the Word of God, and the circumſtances belonging thereunto.

XXXIII.

Wee believe that our gracious God, having regard on our meanneſs and infirmity, hath afforded us the Sacraments, for to be ſeales of his promiſes, and pledges of the kindneſs and grace of God unto us; and thereby to nouriſh and ſuſtain our faith; having joyned them with the Word of the Goſpel, that ſo he might propound to our outward ſenſes, both that which he ſignifies unto us by his Word, and that which he workes inwardly in our hearts, aſſuring us of the ſalvation, which he doth impart us. For they are viſible ſigns and Seals of an inward and inviſible thing, by which means God worketh in us through the power of the holy Ghoſt. Therefore the ſigns are not invain or empty to be deceived thereby; for Chriſt Jeſus is the truth thereof, without whom they would ſignify nothing at all. Moreover wee are content with the number of the Sacraments, which Chriſt our Maſter hath inſtituted, being but two, to wit the Sacrament of Baptiſm, and that of the holy Supper of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

XXXIV.

Wee believe and confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt, who is the end of the Law, hath made an end by the ſhedding of his blood, of all other ſheddings of blood, that might be made for the propitiation and ſatisfaction of ſin; and that having abro-

abrogated the circumciſion which was done with blood, hath inſtituted inſtead thereof the Sacrament of Baptiſme, by which wee are received in the Church of God, and become ſeparated from all other people and ſtrange Religions, that ſo wee may be fully addicted to him, and bear his Mark and Enſign; And it ſerves us for a teſtimony, that hee will be our God, and a Gracious Father unto us for ever. Therefore hee has given a Charge to Baptize all that are his, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, onely with pure water, giving us thereby to underſtand, that as the water cleanſes the filth of the body, when it is powred upon us, which may be ſeen upon the body of him who receives the Baptiſme, being ſprinkeled thereby; ſo the blood of Chriſt performeth the ſame within in the ſouls, by the holy Ghoſt, ſprinkling and cleanſing them from their ſins, and regenerating us from Children of wrath unto Children of God. However this is not done by the outward water, but by the Sprinkling of the precious blood of the Son of God, who is our red Sea, through which wee muſt paſs, for to eſcape the Tyranny of Pharao, which is the Devil, and to enter in to the Spiritual Land of Canaan. Likewiſe the Miniſters give us on their part the Sacrament, and that which is viſible: but our Lord gives that which is ſignifyed by the Sacrament, *viz.* the inviſible gifts and graces, waſhing, cleanſing, and purifying our Souls from all filthineſs and iniquities, and renewing our hearts, and filling them with all comfort, giving us a true aſſurance of his Fatherly Kindneſs, enduing us with the new man, and putting away the ould man with all his deeds. Therefore wee believe, that whoſoever intends to enter into life eternal, he muſt be Baptiſed but once with the onely Baptiſm, without ever repeating the ſame: for wee cannot be born twice. And this Baptiſm is not onely uſefull whilſt the water is upon us; and that wee receive the ſame, but alſo through all our life time; therefore wee reject the error of the Anabaptiſts, who are not content with the one onely Baptiſm, which once they have received, but condemn alſo the Baptiſm of the Infants of Believers; which wee believe ought to be baptized and ſealed with the mark of the Covenant, as the Infants in Iſrael were circumciſed on the ſame promiſe which is made to our Children. And indeed Chriſt has ſhed his bloud no leſs for the waſhing of the Children of the faithfull, as he hath done for adulted perſons. And therefore they ought to receive the ſign and the Sacrament of that which Chriſt has done for them: as under the Law the Lord commanded to participate unto them the Sacrament of the ſufferings and dying of Chriſt, ſhortly after their birth, offering for them a Lambe, which was a Sacrament of Jeſus Chriſt. Beſides, what the Circumciſion did unto the Jewes, the ſame is done by the Baptiſme unto our Children; which is the cauſe why S^t. Paul call's the Baptiſme the Circumciſion of Chriſt.

XXXV.

Wee believe and confeſs that our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt has inſtituted and ordained

dained the Sacrament of the holy Supper, to nouriſh and ſuſtain thoſe which hee hath already regenerated, and incorporated into his Family which is his Church; thoſe now who are regenerated have two ſorts of lives in them, the one corporal and temporal, which hath accompanied them from their very birth, and is common to all men; the other is ſpiritual and heavenly, which is given them in the ſecond birth proceeding from the Word of the Goſpel, in the fellowſhip of the body of Chriſt; and this life is not univerſal, but belongs onely to the Elect of God. Thus God hath afforded us to the nouriſhing of the corporal and earthly life, earthly and ordinary bread, which is ſerviceable thereunto, and common to every one, as life is: But to the ſuſtaining of the ſpiritual and heavenly life, which the Believers enjoy, he hath ſent the living Bread, which comes down from Heaven, to wit Chriſt Jeſus, who feeds and nouriſhes the ſpiritual life of the Believers, when he is eaten, that is, aſſumed and received by faith in the Spirit. And for to repreſent unto us this Spiritual and Celeſtial Bread, Chriſt hath ordained an earthly and viſible Bread, which is a Sacrament of his Body, and the Wine for a Sacrament of his Blood; to teſtify unto us, that as really as wee receive and have in our hands the Sacraments, and do eat and drink the ſame with our mouth, by which our life is afterwards ſuſtained: ſo likewiſe by faith which is the hand and mouth of our Souls, the true Body and Blood of Chriſt our onely Saviour, is received in our ſoules, for our ſpiritual life. And it is certain and without all doubt, that Jeſus Chriſt has not commanded us the uſe of his Sacraments invain: Therefore he worketh in us whatever he repreſents unto us by theſe holy Signs, although his method ſurpaſſeth our underſtanding, and is incomprehenſible to us, even as the operations of the holy Ghoſt are hidden and incomprehenſible. In the mean while wee do not err, in ſaying that which wee have eaten and drunk, is the natural Body and true Blood of Chriſt, but the manner of our partaking of the ſame is not the mouth, but the Spirit through Faith. Wherefore then Chriſt Jeſus ſits alwayes at the righthand of God his Father in the Heavens; and nevertheleſs he makes us partakers of him by Faith. This Feaſt is a Spiritual table, at which Chriſt diſtributes him ſelf unto us, with all his goods, and he cauſes us to enjoy both him ſelf, and the merits of his ſufferings and Death; nouriſhing, ſtrengthening and comforting our poor diſtreſſed Souls by the eating of his fleſh, and refreſhing and cheriſhing the ſame by the drinking of his Blood. Further thô the Sacraments are joined with the things ſignified, yet they are not received with theſe two things by every one: for the wicked receives the Sacrament to his condemnation, but he doth not receive the truth of the Sacrament; ſo Judas and Simon the ſorcerer both did receive the Sacrament, but not Chriſt, who was ſignified by it; for onely the Believers are made Partakers of him. Laſtly, wee receive the holy Sacrament in the Congregation of the people of God with humility and reverence,

verence, ſolemnizing the holy remembrance of the death of Chriſt our Saviour, with thanksgivings, making there Confeſſion of our Faith and the Chriſtian Religion. None therefore ought to apply him ſelfe thereunto, without a foregoing trial, leaſt eating of the bread and drinking of the cup, he eats and drinks him ſelf a condemnation. To be ſhort, through the uſing of this holy Sacrament wee are ſtirred up to fervent Love to God and our neighbour. Therefore wee reject all mixings and damnable inventions which men have added unto the Sacraments, accounting them but profanations of the ſame: and ſay, that wee ought to be content with the ordinance delivered unto us by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and that wee ought to ſpeak in the ſame Termes as they did.

XXXVI.

Wee believe that our Gracious God, becauſe of the corruption of Mankind, hath ordained Kings, Princes, and Magiſtrates, intending that the World ſhould be governed by Laws and Policy, that ſo the diſſolution of mankind might bee refrained, and all things proceed orderly among men. To that purpoſe he hath given the Magiſtrates the ſword, in their hands for a puniſhment of the wicked, and a protection of the godly; And their office is not onely, to take heed unto, and to watch over politick affaires; but alſo to maintain the holy Eccleſiaſtical ſervice, for the hindring and exſtirpating of all Idolatry and falſe worſhip, for the throwing down of the Kingdom of Antichriſt, and the exalting that of Jeſus Chriſt; and to cauſe the Goſpel to be preached everywhere, that ſo God may be honoured and ſerved of every one, as he has commanded in his Word, Moreover every one, of what quality, condition or State he is, is bound to ſubmitt him ſelf to the Magiſtrates, to pay taxes, to give them all honour, and due reſpect, and to obey them in all things, that are not contrary to the Word of God, praying for them in their prayers, that the Lord may guide them in all their wayes, and that wee may live quietly and peaceably in all God lineſs, and honeſty. And therefore wee reject the Anabaptiſts and other ſeditious people, and in generall al thoſe that do reject Magiſtrates, and the higher powers; and would ſubvert Juſtice, introducing a communion of goods, and confounding the decency which God hath inſtituted among men.

XXXVII.

Laſtly wee believe according to the Word of God, that when the time ordained of the Lord (thô unknown to all Creatures) ſhall be accompliſhed, and the number of the elect compleated, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will come down from heaven corporally and viſibly, as he is aſcended, with great Glory and Majeſty, for to declare him ſelf a Judge both of the living and the dead; appointimg this ould world to bee burnt with fire and flames

for its purification, and then ſhall all men perſonally appear before this great Judge, both Men, Women, and Children, that ever have been from the beginning of the World unto the end, being ſummoned by the voice of the Archangel, and the ſound of the divine Trumpet. For all the dead ſhall be raiſed out of the grave, and the Soules ſhall be joined and united with their own bodies, in which formerly they have lived. And as for thoſe who then ſhall live, they ſhall not dye, as the others, but be changed in a moment, and from corruptible become incorruptible. Then the Books of the Conſcience will be opened, and the dead ſhall be judged according to their deeds done in this World, whether they be good or evil; Nay men ſhall give an account of every idle word which they have ſpoken, which hath bene accounted by the World but ſport and paſtime: and then the hidden things and the Hypocriſy of men will be made manifeſt and diſcovered before every one. And therefore the very remembrance of this Judgment is terrible and dreadfull to the evildoers and the wicked; but very deſirable and comfortable to the godly and Elect; ſeing then their full deliverance shall bee accompliſhed, and they ſhall there receive the fruits of their labour and troubles, which they have undergone: their innocency will appear to all, and they ſhall ſee the terrible vengeance, which God will execute againſt the wicked who have moſt cruelly perſecuted, oppreſſed and vexed them in this world. They will be convicted by the teſtimony of their own conſciences, and ſhall be immortall; but in ſuch a manner that it ſhall be for to be tormented in the everlaſting fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his Angels. On the contrary the Faithfull and Elected ſhall be crowned with glory and honour. The Son of God will confeſs their names before God his Father and his choſen Angels; all teares ſhall be wiped away from their eyes. Their cauſe which now is condemned by many Judges and Magiſtrates, as heretical and ungodly, will beeknown to be the cauſe of the Son of God. And for a gracious reward the Lord will cauſe them to enjoy ſuch a glory, as the heart of men never ſhould be able to imagine. Therefore wee expect that great day with a great longing, that ſo wee may fully enjoy the promiſes of God in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.

FOR

FORME

For the administration of the Sacrament *of Baptisme to Infants.*

THE Doctrine of Baptisme, consisteth of these three points:

First, That wee, with our Children, are conceived and borne in sinne, and are therefore children of wrath, insomuch that wee cannot enter into the Kingdome of Heaven, except wee bee borne againe. This is signified unto us by sprinkling the childe with water; whereby the uncleanneſſe of our soules is set forth unto us; and wee are admonished to loath our selves, and to be humbled before God, and to seeke our cleansing and salvation out of our selves.

Secondly, Baptisme doth signifie and seale unto us the washing away of our sinnes through Jesus Christ; therefore are wee baptized in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost; God the Father doth witnesse and seale unto us, that hee hath entred into an everlasting Covenant of grace with us, that hee hath adopted us to bee his children and heyrs, and will provide for us all manner of good, and keepe from us all evill, or turne it into good.

When wee are baptized in the name of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ doth seale unto us, that he washeth us in his blood from all our sinnes, incorporating us into the fellowship of his death and resurrection, that wee are freed from our sinnes, and accounted just before God.

In like manner, when wee are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost; the holy Spirit of God doth assure us by this Sacrament, that hee will dwell with us, and sanctifie us to bee members of Christ, applying unto us what wee have in Christ, namely, the washing away of our sinnes, the daily reneuwing of our soules, till wee bee presented at last among the rest of the Elect, without spot to partake of everlasting life.

Thirdly, Whereas in all Covenants there are contained two parts; therefore are wee by God through Baptisme admonished of, and obliged unto new obedience, namely, that wee cleave to this One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that wee trust in him, and love him with all our heart, with all our soules, and all our minde, that wee forsake the world, crucifie our ould nature, and walke in a new and holy life.

And if through weakeneſſe somtimes wee fall into sinne, wee must not despaire of Gods mercy, nor continue in sinne, considering that Baptisme is a signe and seale of our everlasting Covenant with God.

And although our children understand not these things, yet may they not therefore bee excluded from Baptisme, for as they are without their know-

ledge partakers of the condemnation through *Adam*, ſo are they againe receiued to mercy in Chriſt; as God ſpeakes to *Abraham*, the Father of all the Faithful, and conſequently to us, and our children, *Geneſ.* 17. ſaying: *I will eſtablish my Couenant betweene mee and thee, and thy ſeed after thee in their generations for an everlaſting Couenant to bee thy God to thy ſeed after thee.* This alſo the Apoſtle *Peter* teſtifieth *Act.* 2. in theſe words; *For the promiſe belongs to you and to your children, and to as many as are afarre off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* Hence it is, that God hath of ould commanded that Infants ſhould bee circumciſed, which circumciſion was a ſeale of this Couenant, and the righteouſneſſe of faith; and therefore alſo Chriſt receiued the little Children, layd his hands upon them, and bleſſed them, *Marc.* 10. Seeing then Baptiſme is put in the place of circumciſion, therefore Infants are to bee Baptized as heyrs of the Kingdome of God, and of the Couenant: and Parents are admoniſhed to inſtruct their Children in theſe things when they are come to yeares of diſcretion.

That therefore this holy ordinance of God may at this time bee adminiſtred to the glory of God, to our comfort, and the edification of his Church, let us call upon the name of our God.

O *Almighty and Eternall God, who, according to thy ſevere judgment, didſt punish with the Flood the impenitent and unbeleeving World, and according to thine infinite mercy didſt ſave Noah with his family; who didſt drowne hard-hearted Pharao with all his people in the Red Sea, and didſt ſafely leade thy people Iſraell through the ſame, by which Baptiſme was ſignified unto us, wee beſeech thee, that thou wilt bee pleaſed out of thy infinite mercy, graciouſly to looke upon theſe Infants* [*this Infant*] *and incorporate them* [*it*] *by thy holy ſpirit into thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo they* [*it*] *may bee buryed with him into his death, and alſo riſe with him to newneſſe of life, that they* [*it*] *may take upon them* [*it*] *daily their* [*his*] *Croſſe, follow him, and cleave unto him with a true faith, firme hope, and fervent love, and willingly leave this life (which is nothing elſe but a continuall death) and at the laſt day may appeare without feare before the tribunall ſeat of Chriſt thy Son, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who, with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, one God, lives and reigns for ever.*

An Exhortation to the Parents, and thoſe *that come with them to Baptiſme.*

Beloved in the Lord, yee have heard that Baptiſme is an ordinance of God to ſeale unto us, and unto our ſeed his Couenant, therefore wee muſt uſe the ſame to this end, and not out of cuſtome or ſuperſtition. That it may then bee manifeſt that ye are thus minded, you are to anſwer ſincerely upon theſe queſtions.

Firſt,

Firſt, Whether you doe not acknowledge that however our children are conceived and borne in ſinne, and therefore are ſubject to all manner of miſeries, yea to condemnation it ſelfe, yet that they are ſanctified in Chriſt, and therefore as members of his Church ought to bee baptized?

Secondly, Whether you do not acknowledge the Doctrine contained in the Ould and Newe Teſtament, and in the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith; which is alſo taught in theſe Chriſtian Churches here, to bee the true and perfect Doctrine of Salvation?

Thirdly, Whether you do not promiſe, and intend to ſee your children, when they come to yeares of diſcretion, every one whereof hee is either Father or Witneſſe, to bee brought up in the foreſaid Doctrine, to the uttermoſt of your power?

Anſwer. Yea.

After in baptizing, the Miniſter of the Word of God ſhall ſay: N. *I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt.*

A Thankeſgiving.

O *Almighty and moſt mercifull God and Father; wee bleſſe and praiſe thee, that thou haſt forgiven all our ſinnes to us and our children, through the blood of thy beloved Sonne Jeſus Chriſt; and through thy Spirit received us as members of thy Son, and adopted us to bee thy children, and confirmed the ſame by this holy Baptiſme; wee beſeech thee, through the ſame Son of thy love, to rule alwayes theſe baptized Infants* [*Infant*] *that they* [*it*] *may bee educated in true piety and Chriſtianity, and growe up in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, acknowledging thy Fatherly goodneſſe and loving kindneſſe ſhewen to them,* [*it*] *and to us, and live in all righteouſneſſe under our Onely Teacher, King and Prieſt Jeſus Chriſt, fighting manfully againſt ſinne, Satan and his whole Kingdome, to laud and praiſe thee, and thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, with the Holy Ghoſt, the one and eternall God to all eternity.* Amen.

F O R M E

For the adminiſtration of Holy Baptiſme to perſons of yeares.

HOwever children of Chriſtian Parents (notwithſtanding they underſtand not this myſtery) muſt be baptized by vertue of the Covenant; yet it is not lawfull to baptize thoſe who are come to yeares of diſcretion, except they firſt bee ſenſible of their ſinnes, and make confeſſion both of their repentance and faith in Chriſt. For, for this cauſe hath not onely John the Baptiſt preached according to the Commandement of God, the baptiſme of Repentance,

tance for the remiſſion of ſins to thoſe who confeſſed their ſinnes, *Marc.* 1. & *Luc.* 3. But our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath alſo commanded his Diſciples to teach all Nations, and then to baptize them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, *Math.* 28. *Marc.* 16. adding this promiſe: *Hee that beleeveth, and is baptized, ſhall bee ſaved.* According to which rule, the Apoſtles, as appeareth out of *Act.* 2. & 10. & 16. have baptized none who were of yeares of diſcretion, but ſuch who made confeſſion of their Faith and Repentance; therefore is it not lawfull now a dayes to baptize thoſe of yeares, except they have learned out of the preaching of the Goſpell the myſteries of holy Baptiſme, and are able to give an account of their Faith by a confeſſion of the mouth. Seeing therefore you are alſo deſirous of holy Baptiſme, to the end it may be to you a ſeale of your ingrafting into the Church of God, that it may appeare that you do not onely receive the Chriſtian Religion, in which you have beene privately examined by us, and of which alſo you have made Confeſſion before us, but that you (through the grace of God) intend and purpoſe to lead a life according to the ſame, you are ſincerely to give anſwer before God and his Church:

Firſt, Whether you beleeve in the true God diſtinct in three Perſons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, who hath made Heaven and Earth, and all that is therein, and that hee ſuſtaineth and governeth the ſame in ſo much that nothing can come to paſſe in Heaven or in Earth, without his will?

Anſwer. Yea.

Secondly, Whether you beleeve that you are conceived and borne in ſinne, conſequently that you are a child of wrath by nature, unfit to any thing that is good, and prone to all evill, and that you in thoughts, words and deeds, have many times transgreſſed the Commandements of God, and whether you bee heartily ſorry for your ſinnes? *Anſwer.* Yea.

Thirdly, Whether you beleeve, that Chriſt, who is the true and eternall God and a true Man, who hath taken his humane nature out of the fleſh and blood of the Virgin Mary, bee alſo given of God to you as your Saviour, and that you do receive by Faith in his blood forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, and that you are a member of Chriſt and his Church, through the power of the Holy Ghoſt?

Anſwer. Yea.

Fourthly, Whether you acknowledge all the Articles of the Chriſtian Religion, as they are taught in theſe Chriſtian Churches out of the word of God, and do purpoſe conſtantly to perſiſt in the ſame Doctrine to the end of your life, and alſo reject all hereſies and errors, which are repugnant to this Doctrine, and promiſe to perſevere in the fellowſhip and Communion of this Church, not onely in the hearing of the Word, but uſing of the Supper of the Lord? *Anſwer.* Yea.

Fifthly, Whether you have purpoſed from your heart to lead alwayes a Chriſtian life, to forſake the world and all the evill luſts thereof (according

as

as it becommeth a member of Christ and his Church) and submit your selves to all our Christian admonition? *Answer.* Yea.

The good and great God out of his bounty give his grace and blessing to this your purpose, through Jesus Christ. AMEN.

FORME

For the administration of the Supper of the Lord.

BEloved in the Lord Jesus Christ; Hearken to the words of the Institution of the Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, so as they are delivered by the Apostle *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 11. *vers.* 23.

I receyved of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night, in which heewas betrayed, tooke Bread, and when hee had given thankes, hee brake it, and said: Take, eate, this is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me: after the same manner also hee tooke the Cup, when hee had supped, saying: This Cup is the Newe Testament in my blood, this do yee as often as ye drinke it in remembrance of mee: For as often as ye eate this Bread, and drinke this Cup, yee do shew the Lords death till hee come: wherefore whosoever shall eate this Bread, and drinke this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall bee guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eate of that Bread, and drinke of that Cup, for hee that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himselfe, not discerning the Lords body.

That wee may now to our comfort celebrate the Supper of the Lord, it is above all things necessary, that wee first trye our selves aright: and secondly, that wee direct it to that end for which Christ hath instituted and ordained the same, namely, to his remembrance.

First, Every one consider by himselfe his sins, and the curses of God due unto him for the same, to the end that hee may abhorre and humble himselfe before God, considering that the wrath of God is such against sinnes, that rather then they should goe unpunished, hee hath punished the same in his beloved Sonne Jesus Christ with the shamefull and bitter death of the Crosse.

Secondly, Every one trye his owne heart, whether hee doe beleeve this faithfull promise of God, that all his sins are forgiven him onely for the Passion and death of Christ, and that the perfect righteousnesse of Christ bee imputed and freely given to him as his owne, yea so perfectly as if hee himselfe in his owne person hath satisfyed for all his sinnes, and consummated all righteousnesse.

Thirdly, Every one examine his owne Conſcience, whether hee purpoſeth with himſelfe to ſhew true thankfulneſſe to God heereafter in his whole life, and to walke uprightly before the face of God; as alſo, whether hee have layd aſide unfeignedly all enmity, hatred, envy, and doe reſolve to walke in true love and peace with his neighbour.

All thoſe that are thus minded, God will certainly receive to mercy, and account them worthy Communicants at the Table of his Sonne Jeſus Chriſt: On the contrary thoſe who have not this witneſſe in their hearts, they eat and drinke to themſelves judgement.

Wherefore wee according to the commandement of Chriſt and the Apoſtle *Paul*, admoniſh all thoſe, who are defiled with theſe following crimes, to keepe themſelves from the Table of the Lord, and do declare unto them that they have no part in the Kingdome of Chriſt: *to wit*,

All Idolaters, all who invocate ſaints deceaſed, and Angels, and other creatures, all who worſhip Images, all enchanters, diviners, charmers, and thoſe who give credit to ſuch enchantements. All deſpiſers of God and his Worde, and his holy Sacraments: all blaſphemers, all thoſe who are given to make ſtriſe, ſedition and mutiny in Church and Commonwealth: all perjured perſons, all diſobedient to Parents or Magiſtrates, all murtherers, contentious perſons, who live in hatred and envy againſt their neighbour; all adulterers, whoremongers, drunkards, thieves, uſurers, gameſters, covetous and all who live a ſcandalous life. All theſe, ſo long as they continue in ſuch ſins, are to abſtain from this meat (which Chriſt hath ordained only for the faithfull) leaſt their judgement and condemnation bee made the heavier and encreaſed.

But Beloved in the Lord, this is not to caſt downe or to deject the contrite hearts of the faithfull, as if none might come to the Table of the Lord but ſuch as are freed from all ſinne: For wee come not to this Supper to teſtify that wee in our ſelves are perfect and juſt, but on the contrary conſidering that wee muſt ſeeke our life out of our ſelves in Chriſt, wee acknowledge heerewith that wee lye in death: therefore notwithſtanding wee feele many infirmities and weakeneſſes in us, namely, that wee have not ſuch a perfect faith, that wee do not give our ſelves to ſerve God with that zeale as wee are bound, but muſt fight daily againſt the weakeneſſe of our faith and the luſts of our fleſh; yet ſeeing by the grace of God wee are ſorry for theſe weakeneſſes, therefore wee reſt aſſured, that no ſinne or infirmity, which againſt our will yet remaineth in us, can hinder us from being received of God in mercy, and from being partakers of this heavenly meat and drincke.

Let us now alſo conſider to what end Chriſt hath inſtituted his Supper; namely, that wee do it in remembrance of him. Now after this manner are wee to remember him by it.

Firſt, That wee are confidently perſuaded in our hearts, that our Lord Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt, according to the promiſe made to our Forefathers in the old Teſtament, was ſent of the Father in the world, and hath taken upon him our fleſh and blood, and borne for us the wrath of God (under which wee ſhould have periſhed everlaſtingly) from the beginning of his Incarnation to the end of his life upon earth, and hath fulfilled for us all obedience to the Law of God and all righteouſneſſe; chiefly when the burden of our ſinnes, and the wrath of God preſt out of him that bloody ſweat in the Garden, where hee was bound that wee might bee freed from our ſinnes, and afterwards ſuſtained innumerable injuries that wee might never be confounded, was innocently condemned to death, that wee might bee abſolved before the judgment ſeat of God; yea, ſuffered his bleſſed body to be nayled to the Croſſe, that hee might faſten upon it the handwriting of our ſinnes, and hath alſo taken upon himſelfe the curſſe due to us, that hee might fill us with his bleſſing, and hath humbled himſelfe into the deepeſt pangs of Hell with ſoule and body on the tree of the Croſſe, where hee cryed out with a loud voyce, *My God, my God, Why haſt thou forſaken mee?* that wee might bee received of God and never forſaken of him; and finally, confirmed with his death and bloodſhedding the new and everlaſting Covenant of grace and reconciliation, when hee ſayd, *It is finished.*

And that wee might firmly believe that wee belong to this Covenant of grace, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his laſt Supper tooke Bread, gave thankes, brake it, and gave it to his Diſciples and ſayd, *Take, eate, this is my Body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of mee.* In like maner alſo after Supper, hee tooke the Cup, gave thankes, and ſayd; *Drinke yee all of this: This Cup is the new Teſtament in my blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remiſſion of ſinnes: do this, ſo often as yee drincke of it, in remembrance of mee.* That is, as often as yee eate of this Bread, and drincke of this Cup, yee ſhall thereby, as by a certaine pledge and remembrance, bee admoniſhed and aſſured of this my hearty love and faithfulneſſe towards you, that whereas yee ſhould have ſuffered eternall death, I have given my body into the death of the Croſſe, and ſhed my blood for you; and as certainely as you ſee this Bread broken before your eyes, and this Cup given to you, and yee with your mouth do eate and drincke the ſame to my remembrance, ſo do I feed and refreſh your hungry and thirſty ſoules with my body and blood to everlaſting life.

Out of this Inſtitution of the Supper of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, wee do ſee that hee directs our faith and confidence to his perfect ſacrifice (which was once offered on the Croſſe) as to the onely ground and foundation of our ſoules, that hee is become to our hungry and thirſty ſoules the true food to eternall life. For by his death he hath taken away the cauſe of our everlaſting death and miſeries, namely ſinne; and hath merited for us the quickening ſpirit, that wee by the ſame (which dwelleth in Chriſt as the head, and in us as his mem-

bers) might have true Communion and fellowſhip, and be made partakers of all his bleſſings to everlaſting life and glory. Beſides that, wee by the ſame ſpirit may alſo be united together into brotherly love, as members of the ſame myſtecall body; as the Scripture ſaith, *One Bread is it, ſo are wee one Body;* becauſe wee are all made partakers of one Bread; For as out of many graines being grinded, one Bread is made; and out of many Berries, being preſt together, one drincke floweth, ſo ſhall wee all who by a true Faith are ingrafted into Chriſt, bee one body, through brotherly love for Chriſt his ſake, who hath ſo exceedingly loved us; and manifeſted the ſame one towards another, not onely in words, but alſo in workes and deeds. Heereto aſſiſt us the Almighty Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, through his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

And that wee may obtaine this, let us humble our ſelves before God, and in true Faith call upon him for his grace.

O *Moſt mercifull God and Father, wee beſeech thee, that in this ordinance in which wee celebrate the bleſſed memory of the moſt bitter death and paſſion of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, thou wilt bee pleaſed to worke in our hearts through the Holy Ghoſt, that wee may give our ſelves more and more with true confidence to thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo our broken and burdened hearts may bee fed and comforted through the power of the Holy Spirit with his body and blood, yea with him true God and Man, the onely Bread of Heaven; and that henceforth wee may not live any longer in our ſinnes, but hee in us, and wee in him, and bee alſo really partakers of that new and everlaſting Covenant of Grace; no wayes doubting but that thou wilt bee our eternall and Gracious God, not imputing our ſinnes unto us, but filling us with all good things for body and ſoule, as thy beloved Children and Heyres. Graunt alſo unto us thy grace, that wee may take upon us our croſſe cheerefully, deny our ſelves, confeſſe our Saviour, and in all tribulations expect our Lord Jeſus Chriſt out af Heaven, where hee will make our mortall bodies conformable to his moſt glorious body, and take us to himſelfe to bee with him in all eternity.*

Anſ. O *Ur Father, which art in heaven.*
1. *Hallowed be thy Name.*
2. *Thy Kingdome come.*
3. *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*
4. *Give us this day our daily bread.*
5. *And forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them, that treſpaſſe againſt us.*
6. *And lead us not into temptation: But deliver us from evill.*
For thine is the kingdome, the power, and the glorie, for ever, and ever. Amen.

Strengthen us alſo by this Holy Sacrament in the Articles of our Chriſtian Faith, of which wee make Confeſſion, ſaying with heart and mouth:

I Be-

I *Beleeve in God, the Father almightie, maker of heaven and earth.*
ij. *And in Jeſus Chriſt his onely begotten Sonne our Lord.*
iij. *Which was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt: borne of the virgine Marie.*
iv. *Suffered under Pontius Pilate: was crucified, dead and buried: he deſcended into hel.*
v. *The third day he roſe again from the dead.*
vj. *He aſcended into heaven, and ſitteth at the right hand of God the Father almightie.*
vij. *From thence shall he come to judge the quick and the dead.*
viij *I beleeve in the Holy Ghoſt.*
ix. *I beleeve an Holy Catholike church: the Communion of Saints.*
x. *The forgivenes of ſinnes.*
xj. *The reſurrection of the body.*
xij. *And life everlaſting, Amen.*

That wee may now bee fed with the true heavenly Bread, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſo let not our hearts cleave to the outward elements of Bread and Wine; but let us lift up the ſame into Heaven, where Chriſt our Advocate is, ſitting on the right hand of his heavenly Father, whether alſo wee are directed by the Articles of our Chriſtian faith, nothing doubting but wee ſhall bee fed and refreſhed with his Body and Blood by the power of the Spirit, ſo certainly as wee receive this holy Bread and Wine to his remembrance.

In breaking and diſtributing of the Bread, the Miniſter ſhall ſay: *The Bread which wee breake, is the Communion of the body of Chriſt.*

And when hee gives the Cup, *The Cup of bleſſing, wherewith wee bleſſe, is the Communion of the Blood of Chriſt.*

During the Communion, there ſhall eyther bee ſung ſome Pſalm, or ſome Chapter read, which may ſerve to the remembring of the Paſſion of Chriſt, as, Eſa Chap. 53. Joh. 13. and 14. and 15. and 16. and 18. or the like.

After the Communion, the Miniſter ſhall ſay: Beloved in the Lord, Becauſe the Lord hath fed our ſouls at his Table, let us all with thanckeſgiving praiſe his Name, and every one ſay in his heart thus:

Bleſſe the Lord, o my ſoule, and all that is within me bleſſe his holy Name: Bleſſe the Lord, o my ſoule, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diſeaſes, who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindneſſe, and tender mercies, who ſatisfied thee with good things. The Lord is merciſull and gracious, ſlow to anger, and plenteous in mercy: Hee doth not deale with us after our ſinnes, nor rewarde us according to our iniquities: for as the Heaven is high above the earth, ſo great is his mercy towards them that feare him; as farre as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo farre hath hee remooved our transgreſſions from

us; like as a Father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that feare him; who alſo hath not ſpared his owne Sonne, but hath given him for us all, and hath given us with him all things: therefore doth God ſhew his love towards us thereby, that Chriſt dyed for us, when wee were yet ſinners; therefore ſhall wee be the more ſaved by him from his wrath, after wee are juſtified through his blood. For, if wee be reconciled through the death of his Sonne, when wee were yet enemyes, much more ſhall wee bee ſaved through his life after wee are reconciled with him; therefore ſhall my heart and mouth praiſe the Lord from this time forth and evermore. *Amen.*

Let every one therefore ſay with an attentive heart;

ALmighty and moſt mercifull God and Father, wee render thankes to thee with all our hearts, that thou haſt given unto us, out of thy infinite mercy, thine onely begotten Sonne to bee our Mediator and a Saerifice for our ſinnes, yea, to bee our food to everlaſting life; and haſt alſo given unto us a true and lively Faith, whereby wee are made partakers of all his benefits: and that thou haſt cauſed thy Son to inſtitute this Holy Supper, for the confirmation of our Faith: Graunt wee beſeech thee, moſt faithfull God and Father, that through the operation of thy Holy Spirit, this commemoration of the death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt may tend to the encreaſe of our faith and ſaving fellowship with him, through Jeſus Chriſt thy Sonne our Saviour, in whoſe name wee conclude our Prayers, ſaying: Our Father, &c.

FORME

Of Excommunication.

BEloved in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; It is knowen unto you, how that at ſeverall times, by ſeverall degrees, wee have propounded unto you, what a haynous ſinne hath beene committed by our fellow-member N. and what great offence thereby is given, to the end that hee, through the helpe of your prayers and Chriſtian admonition, might be brought to repentance, and ſo bee freed from the bonds of Sathan where in hee is kept, and awake to the will of the Lord; Now, wee can not conceale from you with great heavineſſe, that there is no body yet come to us who hath in the leaſt meaſure given us to underſtand, that hee through the manifold admonitions which have beene given to him both apart by himſelfe alone, and before witneſſe in the preſence of many, is come to any ſorrow or remorſe for his ſinne, or to the manifeſtation of the leaſt token of repentance: Seeing therefore that hee doth aggravate his ſinne (which yet in it ſelfe is no ſmall one) by his ſtifneſſe and hardheartedneſſe;

neſſe; and ſeeing wee have ſignifyed unto you the laſt time, that in caſe hee after ſuch patience ſhewed towards him by the Church, do not repent, that wee ſhould bee forced yet further to bee grieved for him, and to come to the laſt remedy; therefore wee are neceſſitated for the preſent to proceed to his excommunication, according to the power and commandement given unto us in the Worde of God, to the end that hee by this meanes, if it bee poſſible, might bee brought to ſhame and remorſe for his ſinne, and that the whole body of the Church may not bee put in danger by this rotten (and as yet incurable) member, and that the name of the Lord may not bee blaſphemed.

Therefore wee Miniſters, and Elders of the Church, being met in the name and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, declare before you all, that for reaſons above mentioned, wee have excommunicated, and by theſe do excommunicate N. from the Church of the Lord, and from fellowſhip with Chriſt and his Sacraments, and all ſpirituall bleſſings which God hath promiſed and doth fulfill to his Church, ſo long as hee perſiſts in his ſtubbornneſſe and impenitency, and therefore is to be eſteemed of you as an heathen and publican, according to the Commandement of God Mat. 18. who ſaith, that is bound in Heaven, what his Miniſters binde heere on Earth.

Further, wee do admoniſh you, beloved Chriſtians, that you keepe no company with him, that hee may bee aſhamed; yet holde him not as an enemy, but admoniſh him ſometimes as you do a brother: meane while every one take to heart this and the like example, to feare the Lord, and if hee thinckes hee ſtands, to bee carefull that hee may not fall, but having true fellowſhip with the Father and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, as alſo with all true believing Chriſtians, perſevere therein to the end, and ſo partake of everlaſting ſalvation. You have ſeene, Beloved Brethren and Siſters, in what manner this our Excommunicated Brother hath begunne to fall, and by little and little is come to ruine; obſerve therefore, how ſubtile Sathan is to bring people to deſtruction, and to take them off from all wholeſome meanes to ſalvation: therefore take heed of the leaſt beginning of evill, and according to the admonition of the Apoſtle, laying aſide all weight and ſinne, which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, runne conſtantly the race which is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus, the beginner and finiſher of our Faith: bee ſober, watch, and pray, that you fall not into temptation; to day if you heare the voyce of the Lord, harden not your hearts, but worke out your ſalvation with feare and trembling, and every one repent of his ſinnes, that God do not againe humble us, and wee bee forced to bee grieved over any of you, but that you living godly with one accord, may bee our joy and crowne in the Lord.

But ſeeing God muſt worke in us both the will and the deed according to his good pleaſure, let us, with confeſſion of our ſinnes, call upon his name.

Moſt

MOſt righteous God and mercifull Father, wee bewaile our ſinnes before thy moſt high Majeſty, acknowledging that wee have deſerved that ſorrow and griefe which hath beene cauſed by the cutting off of this party, once a member of us; yea, wee are worthy in regard of our great ſinnes, if thou ſhouldeſt enter into judgement with us, to bee eternally ſeparated from thee: But thou, O Lord, art gracious unto us for Chriſt his ſake; Pardon unto us our ſinnes, for wee are heartily ſorry for the ſame: worke in us a greater meaſure of ſorrow; that wee fearing thy judgements which thou executeſt againſt ſtubborne and impenitent ſinners, may labour ſo much the more to pleaſe thee. Graunt that wee may keepe our ſelves from all pollutions and defilements of the world, and of all thoſe who are cut off from the communion of the Church; that wee may not make our ſelves partakers of their ſinnes, and that thoſe who are cut off, may bee brought to ſhame for their ſinnes. And ſeeing thou takeſt no pleaſure in the death of ſinners, but that they returne and live, and ſetteſt alwayes open the boſome of thy Church to receive penitent ſinners; bee pleaſed to kindle in us a right zeale, that both by our admonitions and examples wee may labour to reduce againe this excommunicated perſon, and all ſuch who through infidelity and wickedneſſe of life are going aſtray: bleſſe our admonitions, that wee may have cauſe to rejoyce over him, for whoſe ſake wee are now in heavineſſe, that thy holy name may bee glorified through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath taught us to pray. Our Father, &c.

FORME

For the receiving and admitting againe of excommunicated perſons.

BEloved in the Lord, it is knowne unto you, that ſometimes paſt our fellow member N. hath beene Excommunicated and cut off from the Church of Chriſt. Now wee can not conceale from you, how that hee through the forenamed remedy, as alſo through good admoniſhions and your prayers, is come ſo farre, that hee is aſhamed of his ſinnes, and deſireth to bee received againe into the fellowſhip of the Church.

Therefore wee, being bound to receive ſuch with joy, and yet to keepe alſo good orders, therefore wee give you heere to underſtand, that wee are reſolved to looſe againe the forenamed excommunicated perſon from the bond of excommunication at the next time, when by the grace of God wee ſhall celebrate the Supper of the Lord, and to receive him againe into fellowſhip with the Church, except there bee ſome who meane while ſhall ſhew any lawfull cauſe, wherefore this ought not to bee done; whieh you are to ſignify to us betime. In the meane time every one of you is to praiſe the Lord for his mercy

mercy manifeſted to this poor ſinner, and to intreat him, to perfect his worke in him to his everlaſting ſalvation.

If no impediment bee brought, the Miniſter is to proceed to the receiving of the excommunicated perſon againe after this following manner.

Beloved in the Lord; wee have the laſt time acquainted you with the repentance of our fellowe member N. that he with your conſent may bee received againe into the Church of Chriſt; ſeeing therefore no body hath brought any thing whereby his admiſſion againe ſhould bee differred, therefore wee intend at this time to proceed to the ſame.

The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, having confirmed the ſentence of the Church in the excommunication of an impenitent ſinner, declareth thereupon preſently, that, whatſoever the Miniſter ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven; whereby hee gives to underſtand, that when any body is cut off from the Church, that thereby hee is not bereaved of all hope of ſalvation, but that hee can bee looſed againe from the bond of his condemnation. Therefore, ſeeing God doth declare in his Word, that hee hath no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner, but that hee bee converted and live; the Church in like maner hath hope of the converſion of the excommunicated ſinner, and keepes her boſome open to receive againe the penitent; therefore doth the Apoſtle exhort, 1 Cor. 5. that the Corinthian (whom hee had declared, ſhould have beene cut off from the Church) bee received & comforted againe, ſeeing that after hee had beene reprooved by many, hee was come to the knowledge of his ſinne, leaſt hee bee ſwallowed up by overmuch heavineſſe, 2 Cor. 2. Secondly, Chriſt in the forenamed place doth teach, that the ſentence of abſolution, which is pronounced to ſuch a penitent ſinner according to the Word of God, is accounted ſtedfaſt and firme with the Lord, therefore ought no body who doth uprightly repent, make any queſtion but that hee is received of God, as Chriſt ſayth Joh. 2. *Whoſe ſinnes yee remit, to thoſe they are remitted.*

To come therfore to the buſineſſe in hand, I aſke you N. whether you declare heere before God and his Church from your heart, that you are truely ſorry for your ſinnes and obſtinacy, for which you have moſt juſtly beene cut off from the Church; and whether you doe unfeignedly beleeve that God hath forgiven and doth forgive your ſinnes for Chriſt his ſake, and therefore are deſirous to bee received againe into the Church, to carry your ſelfe from henceforth in all piety according to the Word of God?

Anſwer. Yea.

Heereupon ſhall the Miniſter ſay further.

Wee, in the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, being met heere, declare you N. to bee looſed from the bonds of Excommunication, and pronounce you to ſtand againe in the fellowſhip of the Church, the holy Sacraments, and all other ſpirituall bleſſings and benefits which God hath promiſed, and

makes good to his Church; in which the eternall God preſerve you through his onely begotten Sonne Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

Reſt therefore aſſured, beloved Brother, that the Lord hath received you againe in mercy: bee carefull to take heed of the ſubtile temptations of Sathan, and the wickedneſſe of the world, that you fall not againe into ſinne. Love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for many ſinnes are forgiven you.

And yee beloved Chriſtians, receive this Brother with hearthy affection; rejoyce that hee who was dead, is made alive againe: who was loſt, is found againe: rejoyce with the Angels in Heaven over this ſinner, who repenteth: holde him no longer as one who is a ſtranger, but a fellow Citizen of the Saints, and of the houſhoulde of God. And whereas we can have no good thing from our ſelves, letus bleſſe the Lord for this his mercy, and further call upon his name.

GRacious God and Father, wee bleſſe thee through Jeſus Chriſt, that thou haſt given to this our fellow brother repentance to life; and us cauſe to rejoyce in his converſion: wee pray thee, aſſure him more and more of the forgiveneſſe of his ſinnes, that hee may receive fulneſſe of joy, and greater willingneſſe to ſerve thee. And whereas hee hath offended many by his ſinne, graunt that hee may edify many by his converſion, and that hee may walke in thy wayes ſtedfaſtly to the end; and let us learne by his example, that there is mercy with thee, that thou mayeſt bee feared, and eſteeming him our fellow brother, and coheyre of eternall life, may ſerve thee together with a child ike feare and obedience all the dayes of our life, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe name wee conclude our Prayers, ſaying: Our Father, &c.

FORME

For the Confirmation of the Miniſters of the Word.

After Sermon and Prayers ended, the Miniſter ſhall ſay thus to the people.

BEloved Brethren; It is knowen to you, how that wee three ſeverall times have propounded unto you the name of our fellow Brother N. heere preſent; to ſee if there was any body who had any thing againſt him eyther in doctrine or life, whereby hee might bee hindred from being confirmed in the Miniſtery of the Word; ſeeing now that no body hath ſhewed any lawfull exception againſt his perſon, therefore are we now, in the name of the Lord, to proceed to his Confirmation. For which cauſe you N. and all yee who are preſent,

preſent, are to hearken to a ſhort declaration touching the inſtitution and worke of the Paſtour, or Miniſter of the Word.

Where in the firſt place you are to obſerve; That God our Heavenly Father having purpoſed to call and aſſemble out of ſinfull mankinde a Church to everlaſting life, uſeth heere unto out of his ſingular grace, the miniſtry of men; therefore ſaith *Paul*, That Chriſt hath given ſome to bee Apoſtles, ſome to bee Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtours and Doctors for the perfecting of the Saints, for the worke of his ſervice; namely, the edification of the body of Chriſt. Out of which wee ſee that the Apoſtle ſaith, that, among others, the Paſtors Office is an inſtitution of Chriſt.

Now, what belongs to his holy Office, wee can eaſily ſee out of the very name given unto it; for as the charge of a common Shepheard is to feed the flocke committed unto his charge, to leade, rule, and protect the ſame, ſo is it with the ſpiritual Paſtours, which are ſet over the Church of God, which God eſteemes as ſheepe of his Paſture. The paſtures wherewith theſe Sheepe are to bee fed, is nothing elſe but the preaching of the Word of God, with the ſervice of Prayer, and adminiſtration of the Sacraments; the ſame Word of God is alſo the ſtaffe wherewith the flocke is lead and ruled; conſequently the office of the Paſtours and Miniſters of the worde of God conſiſts heere in:

Firſt; That they faithfully propound the Word of God contained in the writings of the Prophets and Apoſtles, and apply the ſame both in generall and particular to the edification of the hearers, inſtructing, admoniſhing, comforting and reprooving, according to every ones neceſſity; preaching converſion to God, and reconciliation with him through faith in Chriſt, as alſo refuting with the worde of God all errours and hereſies which are repugnant to ſound Doctrine. All this is plainly diſcovered unto us in holy Scripture; For the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, That theſe labour in the Word; and elſwhere hee ſaith, That this ought to bee done according to the rule of Faith, and that a Paſtor muſt hold faſt that faithful and ſincere word which is according to Doctrine, and divide it aright: alſo, hee that prophecyeth (that is, who teacheth Gods word) ſpeaketh to edification, admonition and conſideration. In another place, hee doth put himſelfe as a patterne to Paſtors, declaring that hee openly and in houſes hath taught, and teſtified the converſion to God and Faith in Jeſus Chriſt. But wee reade in an eſpeciall manner a true deſcription of the Office and Miniſtery of the Goſpell, 2. Cor. 5. wherein the Apoſtle ſpeakes after this manner: All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himſelfe through Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given to us (namely to the Apoſtles and Paſtours) the miniſtery of reconciliation, *to wit*, That God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelfe, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them, and hath commited to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, wee are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, wee pray you in Chriſts ſtead to bee reconciled to God.

Touching refutation of unſound doctrine ſaith the Apoſtle to *Titus*, Chap. 1. verſ. 6. That a Miniſter muſt holde faſt the faithful word of God, that hee may bee able by ſound doctrine to convince the gainſayers.

Secondly, The office of the Paſtour is publiquely to invocate the name of God in the behalfe of the whole aſſembly. For what the Apoſtles ſaith, We will give our ſelves to prayer, and the Miniſtery of the Word; the ſame is common to theſe Paſtors with the Apoſtles: to which end the Apoſtle *Paul* thus exhorteth *Timothy*. Wherefore I exhort, that Supplications, Prayers, interceſſions, and giving of Thankes bee made for all men, for Kings, and for all in Authority.

Thirdly, Their order is to adminiſter the holy Sacraments which the Lord hath ordained and inſtituted as a ſeale of his grace; as appeareth out of the Commandement which Chriſt hath given to his Apoſtles and in them to all the Paſtours; Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the holy Ghoſt. In like manner; I received of the Lord that which I alſo delivered unto you. The Lord Jeſus in the night, &c.

Fourthly, The office of the Miniſter of the Word, is to keepe the Church in good diſcipline, and to rule them after that manner which the Lord hath ordained. For Chriſt having ſpoken of Chriſtian reproofe, ſaith thus to his Apoſtles, What you ſhall binde on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven: and Paul will have Miniſters to bee able to governe their owne houſes well, becauſe otherwiſe they ſhould not bee able to governe well the Church of God. For this cauſe alſo the Paſtors are called Houſholders of God, and Biſhops, *That is*, Overſeers and Watchmen; for they have the inſpection of the Houſe of God, wherein they converſe, to the end that all things may bee done decently and in order, and that they open and ſhut with the Keyes, committed unto them, the Kingdome of Heaven, according to the charge given unto them of God.

Out of theſe things it doth appeare, what an honourable worke the Paſtorall office is, ſeeing that ſuch great things are done by the ſame; yea, how neceſſary it is to men for the ſalvation of their ſoules: which is the reaſon alſo, why God would have this office allwayes to remaine. For thus ſpeakes Chriſt to his Apoſtles, when hee ſends them abroad to exerciſe this function; Loe, I am with you to the end of the world.

Where wee ſee, that his will and pleaſure is, that this holy office ſhould bee kept and maintained alwayes upon earth, unto the end of the world; for, thoſe perſons to whom hee ſpake, can not live to the end of the world, and therefore *Paul* exhorteth *Timothy*, that hee would commend that which hee heard of him to faithfull men, who are able to teach alſo others; and to this end alſo hee ordained *Titus* to bee a Paſtor, and commanded him that hee ſhould ordaine Biſhops and Elders in every place.

For as much therefore, as wee, to the maintaining of this office in the Church

Church of God, are now to ordaine a new Miniſter of the Word; and having ſufficiently ſpoken of the charge thereof; Therefore you N. are to anſwer to that which ſhall bee propounded unto you, that ſo it may appeare to every one that you are minded thus to receive this charge.

Firſt, I aske you, whether you feele in your heart that you are lawfully called of the Church, and conſequently of God himſelfe, to this holy office?

Secondly, Whether you hold the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament to bee the onely Word of God, and perfect Doctrine to ſalvation, and whether you reject all opinions which are repugnant to the ſame?

Thirdly, Whether you promiſe to diſcharge your office faithfully according to the ſame Doctrine, and to adorne your Doctrine with a godly life; ſubmitting your ſelfe to the admonition of the Church, if you ſhould come to miſcarry eyther in Doctrine or life, according to the received order of the Churches? Heereupon hee ſhall anſwer; yea, from my heart.

Then ſhall the Miniſter, who demandeth theſe queſtions of him, or an other, if there bee more then one, lay his hands upon him; and ſay thus:

NOTA. *This Ceremony ſhall not bee uſed in the Confirmation of thoſe, who have beene in the Miniſtery before.*

God our heavenly Father, who hath called you to this holy Office, enlighten you by his holy Spirit, ſtrenghten you by his grace, and ſo governe you in your Miniſtery, that you may walke therein fruitfully as you ought, to the gloly of his Name, and enlargement of the Kingdome of his Sonne Jeſus Chriſt, *Amen.*

Afterwards ſhall the Miniſter from the Pulpit admoniſh the Miniſter Confirmed, and the whole Church in following manner.

Take heed therefore, beloved Brother and fellowſervant in Chriſt, unto your ſelfe, and to the whole flocke, over which the holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeer, to feed the Church of God. which hee hath purchaſed with his owne blood: Love the Lord Chriſt, and feede his ſheepe, taking overſight thereof not by conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucres ſake, but with a willing minde; not as being Lord over the people of God, committed to you; but as one who is made a patterne to the flocke; bee an example to the faithfull, in Word, in Doctrine, in love, in faith, in purity. Hold on in reading, admoniſhing, inſtructing; neglect not the gift which is given unto you; bee diligent that your progreſſe may bee made manifeſt in all.

Take heed to the Doctrine, and bee conſtant therein; beare patiently all ſufferings and oppreſſion as a good Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt. If you doe theſe things, you ſhal ſave your ſelfe, and thoſe that heare you; and when the chiefe Shepheard ſhall appeare, you ſhall receive the incorruptible crowne of glory.

And yee, beloved Chriſtians; receive this your Miniſter in the Lord with all joy, and reſpect; conſider that God through him ſpeakes to you; receive his word, which hee according to the Scripture ſhall declare unto you: not as the worde of man, but as it is the Worde of God: let the feet of thoſe who preach you the glad tidings of peace, bee welcome unto you: bee obedient to thoſe who are ſet over you in the Lord, for they watch for your ſoules as thoſe who muſt give an account there of, that they may doe it with joy and not with ſighes, for this is not profitable to you: if you doe theſe things, it ſhall come to paſſe that the peace of God ſhall enter into your houſes, and that receiving this man in the name of a Prophet, yee ſhall receive the reward of a Prophet, and through his word believing in Chriſt, ſhall inherit eternall life through Chriſt.

Yet ſeeing no man is of himſelfe fit for theſe things; let us call upon the name of God.

MErcifull Father, wee bleſſe thee, that thou haſt beene pleaſed out of loſt man kynde, to gather a Church to everlaſting life through the Miniſtery of man, and that thou haſt ſo graciouſly provided a faithfull Miniſter for this Church in this place: Wee beſeech thee, tot fit him more and more with thy Spirit to the Miniſtery to which thou haſt called him; enlighten his minde to underſtand the holy Scriptures, give him utterance to publiſh the myſteries of the Goſpell with an undaunted Spirit; furniſh him with Wiſedome, to rule aright the people over whom thou haſt ſet him, and to keepe them in Chriſtian peace, that ſo thy Church may under his miniſtery encreaſe in number and vertue: give him courage in all difficulties and troubles which he may meet with in his Miniſtery, that hee being ſtrenghthened ihrough the comforts of thy Spirit remaining ſtedfaſtly to the end, may be received with all thy faithfull ſervants into his Maſters joy. Graunt alſo to this people: that they may carry themſelves a right towards this their Miniſter; acknowledging him ſent of thee, receiving his doctrine with all reverence, and ſubmitting themſelves to his exhortations, that ſo believing through his word they may bee made pattakers of everlaſting life. Heare us, gracious Father, for thy deare Sonne his ſake, who hath taught us to pray after this manner,

Our Father, &c.

FOR-

FORME

For the Confirmation of Elders and Deacons, when they are confirmed at the ſame time; and if Elders and Deacons bee confirmed a part, then ſhall this Forme bee uſud according to occaſions.

BEloved Chriſtians; you know that wee now at ſeverall times have propounded uto you the names of our fellow Brethren heere preſent, who are called to the Office of Elders and Deaconſhip to this Church, to know whether there bee any that hath any thing againſt them why they ſhould not bee Confirmed in their Offices; ſeeing that no body is come before us, who hath brought any lawfull exception againſt them, therefore wee are to goe on at this preſent with the Confirmation of the ſame; for this end yee N: N:, who are to bee confirmed, hearken firſt to aſhort Declaration concerning the inſtitution and the Offices of Elders and Deacons.

Concerning the Elders: it is to bee obſerved, that the name of Elders (which name is taken out of the Old Teſtament, and ſignifieth a perſon who is placed in an honourable Office of Government over others) is given to two ſorts of Perſons which ſerve in the Church of Chriſt. For the Apoſtle ſaith, The Elders who rule well, are worthy of double honour, ſpecially thoſe, who labour in the Word and Doctrine: out of which it is manifeſt, that in the Apoſtolicall Church there have beene two ſorts of Elders, where of the firſt have laboured in the Word and Doctrine, and the others not: the former were the Miniſters of the Word, the Paſtours who preach the Goſpel, adminiſter the Sacraments, but the others who did not labour in the Word, yet ſerving the Church, had aſpeciall charge; namely, that they tooke overſight of the Church, and with the Miniſter of the Worde did rule the ſame. For after the Apoſtle *Paul* had ſpoken *Rom.* 12. of the Miniſtery of the Word, as alſo of the Office of the Deacons, hee ſpeakes of this Office afterwards, ſaying: *Hee that ruleth, let him doe it with all diligence*, and ſo in an other place, 1 *Cor.* 12. Among other Offices which God hath ordained in his Church, hee reckens *Government*: in ſo much that this ſorte of Miniſters, is given as a helpe and aſſiſtance to the others who preach the Goſpell; as in the old Teſtament the Levites were ioyned to the Prieſts in the common ſervice of the Tabernacle, to bee helpers unto them in thoſe things, which the Prieſts alone could not performe, remaining notwithſtanding diſtinct offices. Beſides this, it is neceſſary that to the Miniſters of the Word ſuch men be joyned in the Government of the Church; that all Lording and Tyranny, which can creepe in ſooner if the Government lye in the hand of one, or few, may bee kept out of the Church; & ſo the Miniſters of the Word & the Elders make up one

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Assembly, being as a Senate of the Church, and representing the whole Church; whereunto Christ had respect, when hee saith; *Tell the Church*, which can not be meant of the Church apart, but very well of those, who by the Church are chosen, to governe the same.

The Office of the Elders, consists herein.

First, To take with the Ministers of the Word the oversight of the Church committed unto them, carefully to looke to it, that every one carry himselfe aright in his Confession, and in his Conversation: to admonish those who carry themselves scandalously, and to take heed, so much as lyes in them, that the Sacraments bee not prophaned, as also to deale with the penitent according to Christian discipline, and to receive them againe into the bosome of the Church; as is manifest not onely out of the forenamed saying of Christ, but also out of other places of Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 5. 2 *Cor.* 12. wherein it is apparent that these things belong not to one: or a few, but to many, who are ordained there unto.

Secondly, Whereas the Apostle commandeth that among Christians al things bee done decently and in order, and no body ought to minister in the Church, but such as are lawfully called there unto, according to Christian Constitutions concerning the same; therefore it belongs also to the office of Elders, to take care thereof and of all things, which concerne the good estate of the Church, to assist the Minister with their counsell and advise; yea, all Christians with advise and consolation.

Thirdly, It belongs also to the charge of Elders to looke to the Doctrine and life of the Ministers of the Word, to the end all may bee ordered to the edification of the Church; and that no strange doctrine bee propounded, according to that which wee reade Act. 20 where the Apostle admonisheth to watch diligently against the wolves who might come into the sheepfold of Christ; and that they may doe this the better, the Elders are bound to search diligently the Sctiptures, and to exercise themselves continually in meditating of the Mysteries of the faith.

Concerning the Deacons; of the Originall and institution thereof wee may read Act. 6. where wee find, that in the beginning the Apostles themselves did serve the poore, at whose feet were laid downe the Price of those goods that were sold, and by whom distribution was made to every one according to his need; but when afterwards there arose a murmuring, because the widowes of the Grecians were neglected in the daily ministration, therefore there were elected (by the advise of the Apostles) men who should make it their worke to serve the poore, that so the Apostles might give themselves continually to prayer & ministery of the Word; and this hath beene kept from that time forward in the Church, as doth appeare Rom. 12. where the Apostle, speaking of this Office, saith, that those who distribute, shall doe it with sincerity; and 1 Cor. 12. speaking of helpers, hee doth thereby understand those

thoſe who are ordained by the Church to helpe the poore in their neceſſities. Out of which places it doth ſufficiently appeare what belongs to the Office of the Deacons; namely,

Firſt, That they Collect and keepe with all faithfulneſſe and diligence the Goods which are given to the poore; yea, to doe their utmoſt endeavours, that many helpers may be found out for the reliefe of the poore.

The ſecond part of their Office, conſiſts in the diſtribution, wherein is not onely required diſcretion and prudence, to give the almes to none but where there is need; but alſo ſimplicity and cheerefulneſſe to diſtribute the almes with an hearty affection to the poore, according to that of the Apoſtle Rom: 12. 1 Cor. 12. For which end it is neceſſary that they doe not onely relieve the poore with outward giftes, but alſo with comfortable words out of the Word of God.

To the end therefore, beloved Brethren N. N., that every one may ſee what you are willing to take upon you the forenamed Offices, every one in his place, you ſhall give anſwer to that which ſhall bee propounded unto you.

Firſt, I aſke you both Elders and Deacons, whether you doe not feele in your hearts that you are lawfully called to theſe holy Offices, each to his, by the Church, and conſequently by God himſelfe?

Secondly, Whether you hold the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament to be the onely Word of God, and the perfect Doctrine to ſalvation; rejecting all Doctrines which are repugnant to the ſame?

Thirdly, Whether you promiſe to performe your Offices as they have beene now deſcribed with all faithfulneſſe according to your power? Yee Elders N. N. in the Governement of the Church with the Miniſters of the Word; and yee Deacons N: N: in the Miniſtring to the poore. Further, Doe yee promiſe both together, to carry your ſelves in all Godlineſſe; ſubmitting your ſelves alſo to the admonition of the Church, in caſe you ſhould come to miſcarry? Heereupon yee ſhall anſwer, Yea.

Whereupon the Miniſter ſhall ſay,

The Almighty God and Father give unto you all his grace, that you may walke in theſe your Offices faithfully and fruitfully. *Amen.*

And ſhall further admoniſh them, as alſo the whole Church, in this following manner.

Wherefore yee Elders, be diligent in governing the Church, which with the Miniſters of the Word, is committed unto you. Bee alſo Watchmen over the Houſe and City of God, to admoniſh every one faithfully, and to warne them of their perdition. Take heed that the purity of Doctrine and Godlineſſe of life be maintayned in the Church.

And yee Deacons, be diligent in Collecting of the almes, prudent and cheerefull in diſtributing of the ſame. Aſſiſt the oppreſſed, relieve the true widowes

dowes and orphans, shew mercifulnesse to all, but especially to the houshold of Faith.

Bee yee all faithfull in your Offices, and keepe the mysteries of faith in a pure conscience, and bee good examples in all things to the people. In so doing you shall get to your selves a good degree, and much cheerefulnesse in the faith of Christ, and hereafter enter into your Masters joy.

On the other side, Beloved Christians, receive these persons as servants of Christ; count the Elders who discharge wel their Office, worthy of double honour, give your selves willingly to their oversight and government. Provide good meanes for the Deacons to the relieſe of the poore. Bee liberall yee rich, give thanckfully, and contribute willingly. And yee poore, be poore in spirit, and carry your selves respectfully towards those who provide for you, be thankfull towards them and murmure not; follow Christ for the food of your soules, and not for the loaves. Hee who hath stolen (or beene burdensome to his neighbour) steale no more, but worke with his hands, that hee may give to those who are in want: If yee doe this, every one that which belongs to him, yee shall receive of the Lord the wages of righteousnesse. But seeing weeare not able of our selves to doe this, let us call upon the Name of our God.

O Lord God, Heavenly Father, wee thanke thee that for the better edification of thy Church, thou hast beene pleased to ordaine with the Ministers of the Word, Rulers and Helpers, by whom thy Church may bee kept in peace and prosperity, and the poore bee maintained; and that thou hast given us into this place men of good testimonies, who are furnished with thy Spirit. Wee beseech thee give unto them more and more such gifts, as are necessary for them in their ministrations, the gift of Wisedome, of Courage, of Discretion and of Goodnesse; that so each of them may carry himselfe aright in his Office: the Elders, in taking a carefull oversight of the doctrine of life, in keeping out of the Sheepefold of Christ all wolves, and in reproving and admonishing all persons who are goeing astray. In like manner the Deacons, in a diligent receiving, and free and prudent distributing of the almes to the poore, and in comforting of the same with thy holy Word. Give grace both to the Elders and Deacons, that they may persevere in their faithfull labour; and not shrincke or grow weary through any trouble or paine, or love of the world. Graunt also thy speciall grace to this people, over whom they are set, that they may submit themselves willingly to the good exhortations of the Elders, counting them worthy of honor for their Office sake; graunt to the Rich liberall hearts towards the poore, and to the poore thanckfull hearts towards those who are helpefull to them, and serve them; that so every one carrying himselfe aright in his Office, thy holy Name may bee magnified, and the Kingdome of thy Sonne Jesus Christ inlarged: in whose name wee conclude

clude our Prayer with that forme of Prayer which hee hath taught us. Our Father, &c.

FORME

For the Confirmation of Marriage before the Church.

SEeing that married Perſons are by reaſon of ſinne ſubject to many miſeries and croſſes, to the end that you N: and you N: (who deſire heere openly to have your marriage-bond confirmed in the Name of God before his Church) may bee aſſured in your heart of the aſſiſtance of God in your croſſes; therefore hearken out of the Word of God, how honourable the married eſtate is, and that it is an ordinance of God which is pleaſing to him: therefore alſo will hee bleſſe and aſſiſt married perſons, according to his promiſe; on the contrary, puniſh the whoremongers and adulterers.

Firſt, therefore yee ſhall know, that God our Father (after hee had created the Heaven, the Earth, and all that is therein) hath alſo created man after his Image, that hee might be Lord over all the beaſts of the Field, the fiſhes in the Sea, and the birds of the Aire: and after hee had created man, hee ſayd, *It is not good that man ſhould bee alone, I will make him a helpe meet for him*; and the Lord God cauſed a deep ſleep to fall on *Adam*, and hee ſlept; and hee tooke one of his Ribbs, and cloſed up the fleſh inſtead thereof; and the Ribb which the Lord God had taken from Man, made hee a woman, and brought her unto the Man. And *Adam* ſaid, *This is now bone of my bones, and fleſh of my fleſh, ſhee ſhall bee called* Woman, *becauſe ſhee was taken of Man*; therefore ſhall a man leave his Father and his Mother, and ſhall cleave unto his Wyfe, and they twaine ſhall be one fleſh.

Therefore yee are not to doubt but the maried eſtate doth pleaſe the Lord God; for he hath made *Adam* his wife, brought her unto him; and given her to him to be his wife: thereby wittneſſing, that hee to this day doth bring, as with his hands, to every man his wife: for this cauſe alſo the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath honoured this eſtate with his preſence, giftes, and miracles in *Cana* of *Galile*, ſhewing thereby that the married eſtate is to bee kept honourably, and that hee will aſſiſt the maried perſons, yea then, when they leaſt of all are thinking upon it.

But that yee may live godly in this eſtate, you muſt know the reaſons wherefore God hath inſtituted the ſame.

The *firſt Reaſon*, is; that each other faithfully aſſiſt one another in all things that belong to this life, and a better.

Secondly, that they bring up the children which they ſhall get, in the true knowledge and feare of God, to his glory, and their ſalvation.

Thirdly, that each of them avoiding all uncleanneſſe and luſts, may live with a good and quiet conſcience. For to avoyd fornication, let every man have his owne wife, and every wife her owne husband; inſomuch that all who are come to their yeares, and have not the gift of continence, are bound by the Command of God, to enter into the married eſtate, with knowledge and conſent of Parents, or Tutors and Friends, that ſo the Temple of God, which is our body, may not bee defiled, for, whoſoever defileth the Temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy.

Next, you are to know, how each is to carry himſelfe towards the other, according to the Word of God.

First, you who are the Husband, ſhall know, that God hath ſet you to bee the head of your wife, that you, according to your ability, ſhall lead her with diſcretion, inſtructing, comforting, protecting her, as the head rules the body; yea, as Chriſt is the head, wiſedome, conſolation and aſſiſtence to his Church: beſides, you are to love your wife, as Chriſt hath loved his Church; you ſhall not be bitter againſt her, but dwell with her as a man of underſtanding giving honour to the wife as the weaker veſſell, conſidering that yee are joynt heires of the grace of life, that your prayers bee not hindered: And ſeeing it is Gods Command that the man ſhall eate his bread in the ſweat of his face, therefore you are to labour diligently and faithfully in the calling wherein God hath ſet you, that you may maintaine your houſhold honeſtly, and likewiſe have ſome thing to give to the poore.

In like manner ſhall you, who are the wife, know, how you are to carry your ſelfe towards your husband, according to the Word of God: You are to love your lawfull Husband, to honour and feare him, as alſo to be obedient unto him in all lawfull things, as to your Lord, as the body is obedient to the head, and the Church to Chriſt. You ſhall not exerciſe any dominion over your Husband; but be ſilent; for *Adam* was firſt created, and then *Eve* to be an helpe to *Adam*; and after the fall, God ſaid to *Eve*, and in her to all women; Your will ſhall bee ſubject to your Husband: you ſhall not reſiſt this ordinance of God, but bee obedient to the Word of God, and follow the examples of Godly women, who truſted in God, and were ſubject to their Husbands; as *Sara* was obedient to her Husband, calling him her Lord: You ſhall alſo bee an helpe to your Husband in all good and lawfull things, looking to your family, and walke in all honeſty and vertue without worldly pride, that you may give an example to others of modeſty.

Wherefore you N. and you N. having now underſtood that God hath inſtituted Marriage, and what hee commands you therein; are yee willing thus to carry your ſelves in this holy eſtate, as you heere doe confeſſe before this Chriſtian

Chriſtian aſſembly, and are deſirous that you be confirmed in the ſame?

Anſwer. Yea.

Whereupon the Miniſter ſhall ſay to the Aſſembly,

I take you all, who are met heere, to witneſſes, that there is brought no lawfull impediment. Further to the married perſons,

Seeing then it is fit that you be furthered in this your worke, the Lord God confirme your purpoſe, which hee hath given you; and your beginning be in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.

Heereupon they ſhall joyne hands together, and the Miniſter ſpeake firſt to the Bridegroome.

N. Doe you acknowledge heere before God, and this his holy Church, that you have taken, and doe take to your lawfull wife N. heere preſent, promiſing her never to forſake her, to love her, faithfully to maintaine her, as a faithfull and pious Husband is bound to doe to his lawfull wife; that you will live holily with her; keeping faith and trueth to her in all things according to the Holy Goſpell? *Anſwer.* Yea.

Afterwards to the Bride;

N. Doe you acknowledge heere before God, and his holy Church, that you have taken, and doe take to your lawfull Husband N. promiſing to be obedient to him, to ſerve and aſſiſt him, never to forſake him, to live holily with him, keeping faith and trueth to him in all things, as a pious and faithfull wife is bound to her Husband, according to the Holy Goſpell?

Anſwer. Yea.

Then the Miniſter ſhall ſay;

The Father of mercies, who hath called you out of his mercy to this holy eſtate of Marriage, knit you together with true love and faithfulneſſe, and give you his holy bleſſings. *Amen.*

Hearken now how firme this bond of Marriage is, as *Matth.* deſcribes it, *Chap.* 19. *Verſ.* 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

The Phariſees came unto Chriſt, tempting him, and ſaying unto him; Is it lawfull for a man to put away his wife for every cauſe? and Hee anſwered, and ſaid unto them: Have yee not read, that hee which made them at the beginning, made them Male and Female? and ſaid; For this cauſe ſhall a Man leave Father and Mother, and ſhall cleave to his Wife; and they twaine ſhall be one fleſh: wherefore they are no more twaine, but one fleſh. What therefore God hath joyned together, let no man put a ſunder. They ſayd unto him; Why did *Moſes* then command to give a Writing of divorcement, and to put her away? Hee ſaid, unto them; *Moſes*, becauſe of the hardneſſe of your

your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so: and I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife except it bee for fornication, and shall marry an other, committeth adultery; and who so marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.

Afterwards shall the Minister command the married persons to kneele downe, and exhort the Church to pray for them.

ALmighty God, who shewest thy power and goodnesse in all thy workes and ordinances, who hast sayd from the beginning that it is not good that Man should bee alone, and for that cause hast made a helpe meet for him, and hast ordained that these two should bee one; who also doest punish all uncleanesse; wee beseech thee, seeing thou hast called these two persons to the State of Marriage, and knit them together, that thou wilt give unto them thy holy Spirit, that they may live holily together with a true and firme faith, according to thy holy Name, and set themselves against all manner of sinne. Blesse them, O Lord, as thou blessest those faithfull Fathers, thy friends and Servants, Abraham, Isaack, *and* Jacob, *that being partakers of that Covenant which thou confirmest to those thy Servants, they may beget holy Children, and educate them in a godly manner, to the honour of thy holy Name, to the edification of thy Church, and propagation of the Gospell. Heare us, Father of all mercyes, through Jesus Christ, thy deare Sonne, our Lord and Saviour, in whose name wee pray further,* Our Father, &c.

Hearken now unto the promise which God made in the 128 Psalm.

Blessed is hee who feareth the Lord, and walketh in his wayes; for thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be wel with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitfull Vine by the sides of thine house; thy Children like olive-plants round about thy Table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord: the Lord shall blesse thee out of *Zion*, and thou shalt see the good of *Jerusalem* all the dayes of thy life: yea, thou shalt see thy childrens children, and peace upon *Israël*.

Our blessed Lord God fulfill your hearts with his grace, and graunt, that yee may live long together in all piety and holinesse.

A M E N.